

THE
WAY of the WORLD.

A. M. C. R. C. H.
A

COMEDY.

Written by Mr. WILLIAM CONGREVE.

*Audire est Opera pretium, procedere rixæ
Qui machis non vultis ———— Hor. Sat. 2. l. 1.
——— Metuat doli deprensæ. ———— Ibid.*

D U B L I N :

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M. DCC, LXXIII.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Fainall, in Love with Mrs. *Warwood*.

Mirabell, in Love with Mrs. *Millamant*.

Witwoud, } Followers of Mrs. *Millamant*.
Petulant, }

Sir Wilfull Witwoud, half Brother to *Witwoud*, and Nephew to Lady *Wishfort*.

Waitwell, Servant to *Mirabell*.

W O M E N.

Lady *Wishfort*, Enemy to *Mirabell*, for having falsely pretended Love to her.

Mrs. *Millamant*, A fine Lady, Niece to Lady *Wishfort*, and loves *Mirabell*.

Mrs. *Warwood*, Friend to Mr. *Fainall*, and likes *Mirabell*.

Mrs. *Fainall*, Daughter to Lady *Wishfort*, and Wife to *Fainall*, formerly Friend to *Mirabell*.

Feible, Woman to Lady *Wishfort*.

Mincing, Woman to Mrs. *Millamant*.

Dancers, Footmen, and Attendants.

S C E N E L O N D O N.

The time equal to that of the Presentation



THE

T H E
WAY OF THE WORLD.

A C T I. SCENE I.

A Chocolate-House,

Mirabell and Fainall (Rising from Cards.) Betty waiting

Mirabell.



OU are a fortunate Man, Mr. Fainall.

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

Fain. No, I'll give you your Revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently; the Coldness of a losing Gamster lessens the Pleasure of the Winner. I'd no more play with a Man that slighted his ill Fortune, than I'd make Love to a Woman who undervalu'd the Loss of her Reputation.

Mira. You have a Taste extremely delicate, and are for refining on your Pleasures.

Fain. Pr'ythee, why so reserv'd? Something has put you out of Humour.

Mira. Not at all: I happen to be grave to Day; and you are gay: that's all.

Fain. Confess, *Millamant* and you quarrell'd last Night, after I left you; my fair Cousin has some Humours that wou'd tempt the Patience of a Stoick. What, some Coxcomb came in, and was well receiv'd by her, while you were by.

Mira. *Witwood* and *Petulant*; and what was worse, her Aunt your Wife's Mother, my evil Genius; or to sum up all in her own Name, my old Lady *Wishfort* came in.

Fain. O there it is then——She has a lasting Passion for you, and with Reason,—What, then my Wife was there?

Mira. Yes, and Mrs. *Marwood* and three or four more, whom I never saw before; seeing me, they all put on their grave Faces, whisper'd one to another; then complain'd aloud of the Vapours, and after fell into a profound Silence.

Fain. They had a Mind to be rid of you.

Mira. For which Reason I resolv'd not to stir. At last the good old Lady broke thro' her painful Taciturnity, with an invective against long Visits. I would not have understood her, but *Millamant* joining in the Argument, I rose and with a constrain'd Smile told her, I thought nothing was so easy as to know when a Visit began to be troublesome; she reddn'd, and I withdrew without expecting her Reply.

Fain. You are to blame to resent what she spoke only in Compliance with her Aunt.

Mira. She is more Mistress of herself, than to be under the Necessity of such a Resignation.

Fain. What? tho' half her fortune Depends upon her marrying with my Lady's Approbation?

Mira. I was then in such a Humour, that I shou'd have been better pleas'd if she had been less discreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last Night was one of their Cabal-Nights; they have 'em three times a Week, and meet by turns, at one another's Apartments, where they come together

together like the Coroner's Inquest, to fit upon the murder'd Reputations of the Week. You and I are excluded; and it was once propos'd that all the Male Sex shou'd be excepted; but some Body mov'd that to avoid Scandal there might be one Man of the Community; upon which motion *Witwoud* and *Petulant* were enroll'd Members.

Mira. And who may have been the Foundress of this Sect? My Lady *Wishfort*, I warrant, who publishes her Detestation of Mankind; and full of the Vigour of fifty five, declares for a Friend and *Ratafa*; and let Posterity shift for itself, she'll breed no more.

Fain. The Discovery of your sham Addresses to her, to conceal your Love to her Niece, has provok'd this Separation: Had you dissembled better, Things might have continu'd in the State of Nature.

Mira. I did as much as Man could, with any reasonable Conscience; I proceeded to the very last Act of Flattery with her, and was guilty of a Song in her Commendation. Nay, I got a Friend to put her into a Lampoon, and compliment her with the imputation of an Affair with a young Fellow, which I carried so far, that I told her the malicious Town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden; and when she lay in of a Dropsy persuaded her she was reported to be in Labour. The Devil's in't, if an old Woman is to be flatter'd further, unless a Man shou'd endeavour downright personally to debauch her; and that my Virtue forbid me. But for the Discovery of this Amour, I am indebted to your Friend, or your Wife's Friend, Mrs. *Marwood*.

Fain. What shou'd provoke her to be your Enemy unless she has made you Advances, which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive Omissions of that Nature.

Mira. She was always civil to me, 'till of late; I confess I am not one of those Coxcombs who are apt to interpret a Woman's good Manners to her Prejudice; and that she who does not refuse 'em ev'ry thing, can refuse 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant Man, *Miraball*; and tho' you may have Cruelty enough, not to satisfy a Lady's Longing;

ing; you have too much Generosity, not to be tender of her Honour. Yet you speak with an Indifference which seems to be affected; and confesses you are conscious of a Negligence.

Mira. You pursue the Argument with a Distrust that seems to be unaffected; and confesses that you are conscious of a Concern for which the Lady is more indebted to you, than is your Wife.

Fain. Fie, fie, Friend; if you grow censorious I must leave you; ——— I'll look upon the Gamesters in the next Room. —

Mira. Who are they?

Fain. *Petulant* and *Witwoud* ——— Bring me some Chocolate.

Mira. *Betty*, what says your Clock?

Bet. Turn'd of the last Canonical Hour, Sir.

Mira. How pertinent the Jade answers me! Ha? almost one a Clock! (*Looking on his Watch*) O, y'are come. ———

SCENE II.

Mirabell and Footman.

Mira. Well; is the grand Affair over? You have been something tedious.

Ser. Sir, there's such a coupling at *Pancras*, that they stand behind one another, as 'twere in a Country Dance. Ours was the last Couple to lead up; and no Hopes appearing of a Dispatch, besides, the Parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his Lungs wou'd have fail'd before it came to our Turn; so we drove round to *Duke's-Place*; and there they were rivetted in a trice.

Mira. So, so, you are sure they are married.

Ser. Married and Bedded, Sir; I am witness.

Mira. Have you the Certificate?

Ser. Here it is, Sir,

Mira. Has the Taylor brought *Waitwell's* Cloaths home, and the new Liveries?

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Mira. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the Consummation 'till farther Order; bid *Waitwell* shake his Ears, and Dame *Partlet* ruffle up her Feathers, and meet me at one o'Clock by *Rafanand's* Pond;

Pond; that I may see her before she returns to her Lady:
And as you tender your Ears be secret.

SCENE III.

Mirabell, Fainall, and Betty.

Fain. Joy of your Success, *Mirabell*; you look pleas'd.

Mira. Ay; I have been engag'd in a Matter of some sort of Mirth, which is not yet ripe for Discovery. I am glad this is not a Cabal-Night. I wonder *Fainall*, that you who are married, and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your Wife to be of such a Party.

Fain. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engag'd are women and Relations; and for the Men, they are of a Kind too contemptible to give Scandal.

Mira. I am of another Opinion. The greater the Coxcomb always the more Scandal: For a Woman who is not a Fool, can have but one Reason for associating with a Man who is one.

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you see *Witwoud* entertain'd by *Millamant*?

Mira. Of her Understanding I am, if not of her Person.

Fain. You do her wrong; for to give her her Due, she has Wit.

Mira. She has beauty enough to make any Man think so; and Complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

Fain. For a passionate Lover, methinks you are a Man somewhat too discerning in the Failings of your Mistress.

Mira. And for a discerning Man, somewhat too passionate a Lover; for I like her with all her Faults; nay, like her for her Faults. Her Follies are so natural or so artful, that they become her; and those Affectations which in another Woman wou'd be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, *Fainall*, she once us'd me with that Insolence, that in Revenge I took her to pieces; sifted her; and separated her Failings; I study'd 'em, and got 'em by Rote. The Catalogue was so large, that I was not without Hopes, one Day or other, to hate her heartily: To which end I so us'd myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my Design and Expectation, they gave me ev'ry Hour less Disturbance; till in a few

few Days it became habitual to me, to remember 'em without being displeas'd. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own Frailties; and in all probability in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her Charms, as you are with her Defects, and my Life on't, you are your own Man again.

Mira. Say you so?

Fain. I, I, I have Experience: I have a Wife, and so forth.

SCENE IV.

(To them) Messenger.

Mes. Is one 'Squire *Witwoud* here?

Bet. Yes, what's your Business.

Mes. I have a Letter for him, from his Brother Sir *Wilfull*, which I am charg'd to deliver into his own Hands.

Bet. He's in the next Room, Friend.—That way.

SCENE V.

Mirabell, Fainall, Betty.

Mira. What, is the chief of that noble Family in Town, Sir *Wilfull Witwoud*!

Fain. He is expected to Day. Do you know him?

Mira. I have seen him, he promises to be an extraordinary Person; I think you have the Honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half brother to this *Witwoud* by a former Wife, who was Sister to my Lady *Wilsfort*, my Wife's Mother. If you marry *Millamant*, you must call Cousins too,

Mira. I had rather be his Relation than his Acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to Town in order to equip himself for Travel.

Mira. For Travell! Why the Man that I mean is above Forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the Honour of *England* that all *Europe* should know we have Blockheads of all Ages.

Mira. I wonder there is not an Act of Parliament to save the credit of the Nation, and prohibit the Exportation of Fools.

Fain.

Fain. By no means, 'tis better as 'tis; 'tis better to Trade with a little Loss, than to be quite eaten up, with being overstock'd.

Mira. Pray, are the Follies of this Knight-Errant, and those of the Squire his Brother, any thing related?

Fain. Not at all; *Witwoud* grows by the Knight, like a Medlar grafted on a Crab. One will melt in your Mouth, and t'other set your Teeth on an Edge; one is all Pulp, and the other all Core.

Mira. So one will be Rotten before he be Ripe, and the other will be Rotten without ever being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir *Wifull* is an odd Mixture of Bashfulness and Obstinacy. — But when he's drunk, he's as loving as the Monster in the Tempest; and much after the same manner. To give t'other his due; he has something of good Nature, and does not always want Wit.

Mira. Not always; but as often as his Memory fails him; and his common Place of Comparisons. He is a Fool with a good Memory, and some few Scraps of t'other Folks Wit. He is one whose Conversation can never be approv'd, yet is now and then to be endur'd. He has indeed one good Quality, he is not Exceptionous; for he so passionately affects the Reputation of understanding Raillery, that he will construe an Affront into a Jest; and call downright Rudeness and ill Language Satire and Fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finish his Picture, you have an Opportunity to do it at full length. Behold the Original.

SCENE VI.

(to them) *Witwoud.*

Wit. Afford me your Compassion; my Dear pity me

Fainall; *Mirabell,* pity me.

Mira. I do from my Soul.

Fain. Why, what's the Matter?

Wit. No Letter for me *Betty*?

Bet. Did not a Messenger bring you one, but now Sir;

Wit. Ay, but no other?

Bet. No, Sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard; — A Messenger, a Mule, a Beast of Burden, has brought me a Letter from

from the Fool my Brother, as heavy as a Panegyric in a Funeral Sermon, or a Copy of Commendatory Verses from one Poet to another. And what's worse, 'tis as sure a Forerunner of the Author, as an Epistle Dedicatory.

Mira. A Fool, and your Brother, *Witwoud*!

Wit. Ay, ay, my half Brother. My half Brother he is, no nearer, upon Honour.

Mira. Then 'tis possible he may be but half a Fool.

Wit. Good, good, *Mirabell le Drole*! Good, good, hang him, don't let's talk of him; — *Fainall*, how does your Lady? Gad, I say any thing in the World to get this Fellow out of my Head. I beg Pardon that I should ask a Man of Pleasure, and the Town, a Question at once so Foreign and Domestic. But I talk like an old Maid at a Marriage, I don't know what I say, she's the best Woman in the World.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your Commendation would go near to make me either Vain or Jealous.

Wit. No man in Town lives well with a Wife but

Fainall. Your Judgment *Mirabell*?

Mira. You had better step and ask his Wife; if you would be credibly inform'd.

Wit. *Mirabell*.

Mir. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I ask ten thousand Pardons; — Gad I have forgot what I was going to say to you.

Mira. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but pr'ythee excuse 'em. — my Memory is such a Memory.

Mira. Have a care of such Apologies, *Witwoud*; — for I never knew a Fool but he affected to complain, either of the Spleen or his Memory.

Fain. What have you done with *Petulant*?

Wit. He's reckoning his Money — my Money it was — I have no luck to-Day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at Play; — for you are sure to be too hard for him at Repastee; — Since you monopolize the Wit that is between you, the Fortune must be his of Course,

Mira.

Mira. I don't find that *Petulant* confesses the Superiority of Wit to be your Talent, *Witwoud*.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and wou'd breed Debates——*Petulant's* my Friend, and a very pretty Fellow, and a very honest Fellow, and has a smattering——Faith and Troth a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small Wit : Nay, I'll do him Justice, I'm his Friend, I wo'nt wrong him——And if he had any Judgment in the World,——he wou'd not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the Merits of my Friend.

Fain. You do'nt know your Friend to be over nicely bred.

Wit. No, no hang him, the Rogue has no Manners at all, that I must own——No more Breeding than a Bumbailly, that I grant you,——'Tis pity ; the Fellow has Fire and Life.

Mira. What, Courage ?

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that, I can't say as to that.——Yet, faith in a Controversie he'll contradict any Body.

Mira. Tho' 'twere a Man whom he fear'd, or a Woman whom he lov'd.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he speaks ;——We have all our Failings ; you are too hard upon him, you are faith. Let me excuse him.——I can defend most of his Faults, except one or two ; one he has that's the Truth on't, if he were my Brother, I cou'd not acquit him——That indeed I cou'd wish were otherwise.

Mira. Ay marry, what's that, *Witwoud* ?

Wit. O pardon me——Expose the Infirmities of my Friend !——No my dear excuse me there.

Fain. What I warrant he's unsincere, or 'tis some such Trifle.

Wit. No, no, what if he be ? 'Tis no matter for that, his Wit will excuse that : A Wit should no more be sincere than a Woman constant ; one argues a Decay of Parts, as 't'other of Beauty.

Mira. May be you think him too positive ?

Wit.

Wit. No, no, his being positive is an Incentive to Argument, and keeps up Conversation.

Fain. Too illiterate.

Wit. That! that's his Happiness——His want of Learning gives him the more Opportunities to shew his natural Parts.

Mira. He wants Words.

Wit. Ay; but I like him for that now; for his want of Words gives me the Pleasure very often to explain his Meaning.

Fain. He's impudent.

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mira. Vain.

Wit. No.

Mira. What, He speaks unseasonable Truths sometimes, because he has not Wit enough to invent an Evasion.

Wit. Truths! ha, ha, ha, ! No, no; since you will have it,—I mean, he never speaks Truth at all.—That's all. He will lie like a Chambermaid, or a Woman of Quality's Porter. Now that is a Fault.

SCENE VII.

(to them) Coachman.

Coach. Is Master *Petulant* here, Mistress?

Betty. Yes.

Coach. Three Gentlemen in a Coach would speak with him.

Fain. O brave *Petulant*, Three!

Bet. I'll tell him.

Coach. You must bring two Dishes of Chocolate, and a Glass of Cinamon Water.

SCENE VIII.

Mirabell, Fainall, Witwoud.

Wit. That should be for two fasting Strumpets, and a Bawd troubled with the Wind. Now you may know what the three are.

Mira. You are very free with your Friends Acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, Friendship without Freedom is as dull as Love without Enjoyment, or Wine without Toasting; but to tell you a Secret, these are Trulls whom he allows

Coach

Coach-hire, and something more by the Week, to call on him once a Day at publick Places.

Mira. How!

Wit. You shall see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more Company here to take notice of him—— Why this is nothing to what he us'd to do;—— Before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself.——

Fain. Call for himself! What dost thou mean?

Wit. Mean! why, he would slip you out of this Chocolate house, just when you had been talking to him—— As soon as your Back was turn'd—— Whip he was gone;—— Then trip to his Lodging, clap on a Hood and Scarf, and a Mask, slip into a Hackney-Coach and drive hither to the Door again in a trice! where he wou'd send in for himself, that I mean, call for himself, wait for himself, nay and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leaves a Letter for himself.

Mira. I confess this is something extraordinary—— I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a coming; O I ask his Pardon.

SCENE IX.

Petulant, Mirabell, Fainall, Witwoud, Betty.

Betty. Sir, the Coach stays.

Petu. Well, well; I come—— 'Sbud a Man had as good be a profess'd Midwife, as a profess'd Whoremaster, at this rate; to be knock'd up and rais'd at all Hours, and in all Places. Pox on 'em, I won't come—D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come.—Let them snivel and cry their Hearts out.

Fain. You are very cruel, *Petulant*.

Petu. All's one, let it pass—— I have a Humour to be cruel.

Mira. I hope, they are not persons of Condition that you use at this rate.

Petu. Condition! Condition's a dry'd Fig, if I am not in Humour—— By this Hand if they were your—— a——a—— your What-d'ye-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off, if I want Appetite.

Mira. What-d'ye-call-'ems! What are they, *Witwoud*? *Wit.*

Wit. Empresses, my Dear,—By your What-d'ye-call-ems he means Sultana Queens.

Petu. Ay, *Roxolano's*.

Mira. Cry you Mercy.

Fain. *Witwoud* says they are——

Petu. What does he say they are?

Wit. I? fine Ladies, I say.

Petu. Pass on, *Witwoud*—Harkee; by this Light, his Relations——Two Coheiresses his Cousins, and an old Aunt, who loves Caterwauling better than a Conventicle.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha; I had a Mind to see how the Rogue wou'd come off——Ha, ha, ha; Gad I can't be angry with him; if he had said they were my Mother and my Sisters.

Mira. No!

Wit. No; the Rogue's Wit and Readiness of Invention charm me. Dear *Petulant*.

Bet. They are gone, Sir, in great Anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps the Complexion, saves paint.

Fain. This continence is all dissembled; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes Court to *Millamant*, and I swear he has abandoned the whole Sex for her Sake.

Mira. Have you not left off your impudent Pretensions there yet? I shall cut your Throat, sometime or other, *Petulant*, about that Business.

Petu. Ay, ay, let that Pass——There are other Throats to be cut.——

Mira. Meaning mine, Sir?

Petu. Not I——I mean nobody——I know nothing——But there are Uncles and Nephews in the World——And they may be Rivals——What then? All's one for that——

Mira. How! Harkee *Petulant*, come hither——Explain or I shall call your Interpreter.

Petu. Explain! I know nothing——Why, you have an Uncle, have you not, lately come to Town; and lodges by my Lady *Wishfort's*?

Mira. True.

Petu.

Petu. Why that's enough——You and he are not Friends; and if he shou'd marry and have a Child, you may be disinherited, ha?

Mira. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this Truth?

Petu. All's one for that; why then I say I know something.

Mira. Come, thou art an honest Fellow, *Petulant*, and shalt make Love to my Mistress, thou sha't, Faith. What hast thou heard of my Uncle?

Petu. I? nothing, I. If Throats are to be cut, let Swords clash; Snug's the Word, I shrug and am silent.

Mira. O Raillery, Raillery. Come, I know thou art in the Womens Secrets——What you're a Cabalist, I know you staid at *Millamant's* last night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my Uncle, or me? Tell me. If thou hadst but Good-nature equal to thy Wit, *Petulant*, *Tony Witwou'd*, who is now thy Competitor in Fame, wou'd shew asdim to thee as a dead Whiting's Eye by a Pearl of Orient; he wou'd no more be seen by thee than *Mercury* is by the Sun: Come, I'm sure thou won't sell me.

Petu. If I do, will you grant me common Sense then, for the future?

Mira. Faith I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that Heav'n may grant it thee in the mean time.

Petu. Well, ha'kee.

Fain. *Petulant* and you both will find *Mirabel's* as warm a Rival as a Lover.

Wit. Pshaw, pshaw, that she laughs at *Petulant* is plain. And for my part——But that is almost a Fashion to admire her, I should——Ha'kee——To tell you a Secret, but let it go no further——Between Friends, I shall never break my Heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an uncertain Woman.

Fain. I thought you had dy'd for her.

Petu. Umph——No——

Fain. She has Wit.

Wit. 'Tis what she will hardly allow any body else——Now, Demme, I shou'd hate that if she were as hand-

some as *Cleopatra*. *Mirabell* is not so sure of her as he thinks of.

Fain. Why do you think so?

Wit. We staid pretty late there last Night; and heard something of an Uncle to *Mirabell*, who is lately come to Town—and is between him and the best part of his Estate; *Mirabell* and he are at some Distance, as my Lady *Wishfort* has been told and you know she hates *Mirabell*; worse than a Quaker hates a Parrot, or than a Fishmonger hates a hard Frost. Whether this Uncle has seen Mrs. *Millamant* or not, I cannot say; but there were Items of such a Treaty being in Embrio; and if it shou'd come to Life, poor *Mirabell* wou'd be in some sort unfortunately fobb'd, Faith.

Fain. 'Tis impossible *Millamant* shou'd hearken to it.

Wit. Faith, my Dear, I can't tell; she's a Woman and a kind of a Humourist.

Mira. And this is the Sum of what you cou'd collect last Night.

Petu. The Quintessence. May be *Wit* wou'd knows more, he stay'd longer—Besides, they never mind him; they say any thing before him.

Mira. I thought you had been the greatest Favourite.

Petu. Ay *tete a tete*; but not in Publick, because I make Remarks.

Mira. You do?

Petu. Ay, ay, pox I'm malicious, Man. Now he's soft you know, they are not in awe of him—The Fellow's well bred, he's what you call a—What-d'ye-em. A fine Gentleman but he's silly withal.

Mira. I thank you. I know as much as my Curiosity requires. *Fainall*, are you for the Mall.

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before Dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park; the Ladies talk'd of being there.

Mira. I thought you were oblig'd to watch for your Brother Sir *Wilful*'s Arrival.

Wit. No, no, he comes to his Aunt's, my Lady *Wishfort*;

fort, pox on him, I shall be troubled with him too; what shall I do with the Fool?

Petu. Beg him for his Estate; that I may beg you afterwards; and so have but one Trouble with you, both.

Wit. O rare *Petulant*; thou art as quick as Fire in a frosty Morning; thou shalt to the *Mall* with us; and we'll be very severe.

Petu. Enough, I'm in a Humour to be severe.

Mira. Are you? Pray then walk by yourselves, — Let us not be accessary to your putting the Ladies out of Countenance, with your senseless Ribaldry; which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

Petu. What what? Then let 'em either shew their Innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else shew their Discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

Mira. But hast not thou then Sense enough to know that thou ought'st to be most asham'd thy self, when thou hast put another out of Countenance?

Petu. Not I, by this Hand—I always take blushing either for a Sign of Guilt or ill Breeding.

Mira. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the Error of your Judgment in defence of your Practice.

Where Modesty's ill Manners, 'tis but fit

That Impudence and Malice pass for Wit.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

St. JAMES'S PARK.

Mrs. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. Fainall.

AY, ay, dear *Marwood*, if we will be happy, we must find the means in ourselves, and among ourselves. Men are ever in Extremes; either doating or averse. While they are Lovers, if they have Fire and Sense, their Jealousies are insupportable: And when they cease to Love, (we ought to think at least) they loath; they look upon us with Horror and Dislike; they meet us like the Ghosts of what we were, and, as from such, fly from us.

Mar. True, 'tis an unhappy Circumstance of Life, that love sho'd ever die before us; and that the Man so often sho'd out-live the Lover. But say what you will, 'tis better to be left, than never to have been lov'd. To pass our Youth in dull Indifference, to refuse the Sweets of Life because they once must leave us, is as preposterous as to wish to have been born old, because we one Day must be old. For my part, my Youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my Possession.

Mrs. Fain. Then it seems you dissemble an Aversion to Mankind, only in compliance to my Mother's Humour.

Mar. Certainly. To be free; I have no Taste of those insipid dry Discourses, with which our Sex of force must entertain themselves apart from Men. We may affect Endearments to each other, profess eternal Friendships, and seem to doat like Lovers; but 'tis not in our Natures long to persevere. Love will resume his Empire in our Breasts, and every Heart, or soon or late, receive and re-admit him as its lawful Tyrant.

Mrs. Fain. Bless me, how have I been deceiv'd! Why you profess a Libertine.

Mar.

Mar. You see my Friendship by my Freedom. Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your Sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs. Fain. Never.

Mar. You hate Mankind?

Mrs. Fain. Heartily, Inveterately.

Mar. Your Husband?

Mrs. Fain. Most transcendently; ay, tho' I say it, meritoriously.

Mar. Give me your Hand upon it.

Mrs. Fain. There.

Mar. I join with you; what I have said has been to try you.

Mrs. Fain. Is it possible? Dost thou hate those Vipers, Men?

Mar. I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

Mrs. Fain. There spoke the Spirit of an *Amazon*, a *Penthesilea*.

Mar. And yet I am thinking sometimes to carry my Aversion further.

Mrs. Fain. How?

Mar. Faith by marrying; if I could but find one that lov'd me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill Usage, I think I should do myself the Violence of undergoing the Ceremony.

Mrs. Fain. You would not make him a Cuckold?

Mar. No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

Mrs. Fain. Why, had not you as good do it?

Mar. O if he shou'd ever discover it, he would then know the worst, and be out of his Pain; but I would have him ever to continue upon the Rack of Fear and Jealousie.

Mrs. Fain. Ingenious Mischief! wou'd thou wert married to *Mirabell*.

Mar. Wou'd I were.

Mrs. Fain. You change Colour.

Mar. Because I hate him.

Mrs.

Mrs. Fain. So do I; but I can hear him nam'd. But what Reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mar. I never lov'd him; he is, and always was insufferably proud.

Mrs. Fain. By the Reason you give for your Aversion, one wou'd think it dissembled; for you have laid a Fault to his Charge, of which his Enemies must acquit him.

Mar. O then it seems you are one of his favourable Enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.

Mrs. Fain. Do I? I think I am a little sick o'th' sudden.

Mar. What ails you?

Mrs. Fain. My Husband. Don't you see him? He turn'd short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

SCENE II.

(To them) *Fainall*, and *Mirabell*:

Mrs. Mar. Ha, ha, ha; he comes opportunely for you.

Mrs. Fain. For you, for he hath brought *Mirabell* with him.

Fain. My Dear.

Mrs. Fain. My Soul.

Fain. You don't look well to-day, Child.

Mrs. Fain. Dye think so.

Mira. He is the only Man that does, Madam.

Mrs. Fain. The only man that wou'd tell me so at least; and the only Man from whom I could hear it without Mortification.

Fain. O my Dear, I am satisfy'd of your Tenderneſs; I know you cannot resent any thing from me; especially what is an effect of my Concern.

Mrs. Fain. Mr. *Mirabell*, my Mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night: I would fain hear it out.

Mira. The Persons concern'd in that affair, have yet a tolerable Reputation.——I am afraid Mr. *Fainall* will be censorious.

Mrs. Fain. He has a Humour more prevailing than his Curiosity, and will willingly dispense with the hearing of one scandalous Story, to avoid giving an Occasion to make another by being seen to walk with his Wife. This way.

way, Mr. *Mirabell*; and I dare promise you will oblige us both.

SCENE III.

Fainall, Mrs. *Marwood*.

Fain. Excellent Creature! Well, sure if I shou'd live to be rid of my Wife, I shou'd be a miserable Man.

Mar. Ay.

Fain. For having only that one Hope, the Accomplishment of it; of Consequence, must put an end to all my Hopes; and what a Wretch is he who must survive his Hopes! Nothing remains when that day comes, but to sit down and weep like *Alexander*, when he wanted other worlds to conquer.

Mar. Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. Faith I think not.

Mar. pray let us; I have a Reason.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mar. Of whom.

Eain. Of *Mirabell*.

Mar. If I am, is it inconsistent with my Love to you that I am tender of your Honour?

Fain. You would intimate then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my Wife and him.

Mar. I think she does not hate him to that degree she wou'd be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear is too insensible.

Mar. It may be you are deceiv'd.

Fain. It may be so. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mar. What?

Fain. That I have been deceiv'd, Madam, and you are false.

Mar. That I am false! what mean you?

Fain. To let you know I see through all your little Arts — Come, you both love him; and both have equally dissembled your Aversion. Your mutual Jealousies of one another, have made you clash 'till you have both struck Fire. I have seen the warm Confession redening on your Cheeks, and sparkling from your Eyes.

Mar. You do me wrong.

Fain.

Fain. I do not——'Twas for my Ease to oversee and wilfully neglect the gross Advances made him by my Wife; that by permitting her to be engag'd, I might continue unsuspected in my Pleasures; and take you oftener to my Arms in full security. But could you think, because the nodding Husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful Lover slept?

Mar. And wherewithal can you reproach me?

Fain. With infidelity, with loving another, with Love of *Mirabell*.

Mar. 'Tis false. I challenge you to shew an Instance that can confirm your groundless Accusation, I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is intensible and your Resentment follows his Neglect. And Instance! The Injuries you have done him are a Proof: Your interposing in his Love. What Cause had you to make Discoveries of his pretended Passion? To undeceive the credulous 'Aunt, and be the officious Obstacle of his Match with *Milhamant*.

Mar. My Obligations to my Lady urg'd me! I had profess'd a Friendship to her; and could not see her easie Nature so abus'd by that Dissembler.

Fain. What, was it conscience then? Profess'd-a Friendship! O the Pious Friendships of the Female Sex!

Mar. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty Vows of Men, whether professing Love to us, or mutual Faith to one another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha: you are my Wife's Friend too.

Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me! Have I been false to her, thro' strict Fidelity to you, and sacrifice my Friendship to keep my Love inviolate? And have you the Baseness to charge me with the Guilt, unmindful of the Merit! To you it shou'd be meritorious, that I have been vicious; And do you reflect that Guilt upon me, which shou'd lie buried in your Bosom?

Fain. You misinterpret my Reproof. I mean but to remind you of the slight Account you once cou'd make of

strictest

strictest Ties, when set in Competition with your Love to me.

Mar. 'Tis false, you urg'd it with deliberate Malice—
'Twas spoke in scorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your Guilt, not your Resentment, begets your Rage. If yet you lov'd, you cou'd forgive a Jealousie : But you are stung to find you are discover'd.

Mar. It shall be all discover'd. You too shall be discover'd ; but sure you shall. I can but be expos'd——If I do it my self I shall prevent your Baseness.

Fain. Why, what will you do ?

Mar. Disclose it to your Wife ; own what has past between us.

Fain. Frenzy !

Mar. By all my wrongs I'll do't——I'll publish to the World the injuries you have done me, both in my Fame and Fortune ; With both I trusted you, you Bankrupt in Honour, as indigent of Wealth.

Fain. Your Fame I have preserved. Your Fortune has been bestowed as the Prodigality of your Love would have it, in Pleasures which we both have shar'd. Yet had not you been false, I had ere this repaid it——'Tis true——had you permitted *Mirabell* with *Millamant* to have stol'n their Marriage, my Lady had been incens'd beyond all means of Reconcilement ; *Millamant* had forfeited the Moiety of her Fortune ; which then wou'd have descended to my Wife ;——And wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful Prize of a rich Widow's Wealth, and squander it on Love and you ?

Mar. Deceit, and frivolous pretence.

Fain. Death, am I not married ? What's pretence ? Am I not imprison'd, fetter'd ? Have I not a Wife ? Nay a Wife that was a Widow, a young Widow, a handsome Widow ; and wou'd be again a Widow, but that I have a Heart of Proof, and something of a Constitution to bustle through the Ways of Wedlock and this World. Will you yet be reconcil'd to truth and me ?

Mar. Impossible. Truth and you are inconsistent——
I hate you, and shall for ever.

Fain. For loving you ?

Mar.

Mar. I loath the Name of Love after such Usage ; and next to the Guilt with which you would asperse me, I scorn you most. Farewel

Fain. Nay, we must not part thus.

Mar. Let me go

Fain. Come, I'm sorry.

Mar. I care not—Let me go—Break my Hands, do——I'd 'em leave to get loose.

Fain. I would not hurt you for the world. Have I no other hold to keep you here ?

Mar. Well, I have deserv'd it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mar. Poor Dissembling——O that——Well, it is not yet——

Fain. What ? what is it not ? What is not yet ? It is not yet too late.

Mar. No, it is not yet too late——I have that Comfort.

Fain. It is to love another.

Mar. But not to loath, detest, abhor Mankind, myself and the whole treacherous World.

Fain. Nay this is Extravagance—Come, I ask your Pardon—No Tears—I was to blame. I cou'd not love you and be easy in my Doubts—Pray forbear—I believe you ; I'm convinc'd I've done you wrong ; and any Way, ev'ry way will make amends ;——I'll hate my Wife yet more, Damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all's she's worth, and we'll retire somewhere, any where, to another World. I'll marry thee——Be pacify'd——Sdeath ! they come, hide your Face, your Tears——You have a Mask, wear it in a Moment. This way, this way, be persuaded.

SCENE III.

Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Fain. They are here yet.

Mira. They are turning into the other Walk.

Mrs. Fain. While I only hated my Husband, I cou'd bear to see him ; but since I have despis'd him, he's too offensive.

Mira. O you should hate with Prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Yes, for I have lov'd with indiscretion.

Mira.

Mira. You shou'd just have so much disgust for your Husband, as may be sufficient to make you relish your Lover.

Mrs. Fain. You have been the Cause that I have lov'd without Bounds, and wou'd you set Limits to that Aversion, of which you have been the Occasion? Why did you make me marry this Man?

Mira. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous Actions? To save that Idol Reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence of which you were apprehensive, where cou'd you have fix'd a Father's Name with credit, but on a Husband? I knew *Fainall* to be a Man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing Friend, a false and a designing Lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour have gain'd a reputation with the town, enough to make that woman stand excus'd, who has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrific'd to the Occasion; a worse had not answer'd to the Purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your Remedy.

Mrs. Fain. I ought to stand in some Degree of Credit with you, *Mirabell*.

Mira. In Justice to you, I made you privy to my whole Design, and put it in your Power to ruin or advance my Fortune.

Mrs. Fain. Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended Uncle?

Mira. *Waitwell*, my Servant.

Mrs. Fain. He is an humble Servant to *Foible* my mother's Woman, and may win her to your Interest.

Mira. Care is taken for that. She is won and worn by this time. They were married this Morning.

Mrs. Fain. What?

Mira. *Waitwell* and *Foible*. I wou'd not tempt my servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, shou'd consent to marry my pretended Uncle, he might, like *Mosca* in the *Rox*, stand upon Terms; so I made him sure before-hand.

Mrs. Fain. So, if my poor Mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the Imposture besines; and re-

lease her by producing a Certificate of her Gallant's former Marriage.

Mira. Yes, upon Condition that she consents to my Marriage with her Niece, and surrender the Moiety of her Fortune in her Possession.

Mrs. Fain. She talk'd last Night of endeavouring at a Match between Millamant and your Uncle.

Mira. That was by *Faible's* Direction, and my Instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. Fain. Well, I have an Opinion of your Success; for I believe my Lady will do any thing to get an husband and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mira. Yes, I think the good Lady would marry any thing that resembled a Man; though 'twere no more than what a Butler could pinch out of a Napkin.

Mrs. Fain. Female Frailty! We must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false Appetite when the true is decay'd.

Mira. An old Woman's appetite is deprav'd like that of a Girl——'Tis the Green-sickness of a second Child-hood; and like the faint Offer of a latter Spring serves but to usher in the Fall, and withers in an affected Bloom.

Mrs. Fain. Here's your Mistress.

SCENE IV.

(To them) *Mrs. Millamant,* Witwou'd, Mincing.

Mira. Here she comes i'faith full Sail, with her Fan spread and Streamers out; and a shoal of Fools for Tenders—Ha, no, I cry her Mercy.

Mrs. Fain. I see but one poor empty Sculler; and he tows her woman after him.

Mira. You seem to be unattended, Madam,—— You us'd to have the *Beau monde* throng after you; and a Flock of gay fine Perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like Moths about a Candle——I had like to have lost my Comparison for want of Breath.

Mira. O! I have deny'd myself Airs to day. I have walk'd as fast through the Croud.

Wit.

Wit. As a Favourite just disgrac'd; and with as few Followers.

Mil. Dear Mr. *Witwoud*, Truce with your Similitudes: For I am as sick of 'em—

Wit. As a Physician of a good Air—I cannot help it, Madam, tho' 'tis against myself.

Mil. Yet again! *Mincing*, stand between me and his Wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. *Mincing*, like a Screen before a great Fire. I confess I do blaze to-day, I am too bright.

Mrs. Fain. But, dear *Millamant*, why were you so long?

Mil. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haste? I have ask'd every living Thing that I met for you; I have enquir'd after you, as after a new Fashion.

Wit. *Millamant*. Truce with your Similitudes—No, you met her Husband, and did not ask him for her.

Mira. By your leave, *Witwoud*, that were like enquiring after an old Fashion; to ask a Husband for his Wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confess it.

Mrs. Fain. You were dress'd before I came abroad.

Mil. Ay, that's true—O but then I had—*Mincing*, what had I? Why was I so long?

Minc. O Mem, your Laship had to peruse a Pacquet of Letters.

Mil. O ay, Letters—I had Letters—I am persecuted with Letters—I hate Letters—No Body knows how to write Letters; and yet one has 'em one does not know why—They serve one to pin up one's Hair.

Wit. Is that the Way? Pray, Madam, do you pin up your Hair with all your Letters? I find I must keep Copies.

Mil. Only with those in Verse, Mr. *Witwoud*, I never pin up my Hair with Prose, I think I try'd once, *Mincing*.

Minc. O Mem, I shall never forget it.

Mil. Ay, poor *Mincing*, tist and tist all the Morning.

Minc. Till I had the Cramp in my Fingers, I'll vow Mem. And all to no purpose. But when your Laship pins

it up with Poetry, it fits so pleasant the next Day as any Thing, and is so pure and so crips.

Wit. Indeed, so Crips?

Minc. You're such a Critick, Mr. *Witwand.*

Mil. Mirabell, did you take Exceptions last Night? O ay, and went away——Now I think on't I'm angry—no, now I thought on't I'm pleas'd—For I believe I gave you some Pain.

Mira. Does that please you?

Mil. Infinitely; I love to give Pain.

Mira. You would affect a Cruelty which is not in your Nature, your true Vanity is in the power of pleasing.

Mil. O I ask your Pardon for that—One's Cruelty is one's Power, and when one parts with one's Cruelty, one parts with one's Power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Mir. Ay, ay, suffer your Cruelty to ruin the Object of your Power, to destroy your Lover——And then, how vain, how lost a thing you'll be? Nay, 'tis true: You are no longer handsome when you've lost your Lover; your Beauty dies upon the Instant: For Beauty is the Lover's Gift; 'tis he bestows your Charms----Your Glass is all a Cheat. The Ugly and the Old, whom the Looking-Glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be flatter'd by it, and discover Beauties in it: For that reflects our Praises, rather than our Face.

Mil. O the vanity of these Men! *Fainall*, d'ye hear him? If they do not commend us, we were not handsome! Now you must know they cou'd not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the Lover's Gift——Lord, what is a Lover, that it can give? Why one makes Lovers as fast as one please, they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases. And then if one pleases one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why you make no more of making of Lovers, Macam, than of making so many Card-matches.

Mil. One no more owes one's Beauty to a Lover, than one's Wit to an Echo: They can but reflect what we look and say, vain empty Things if we are silent or unseen, and want a Being.

Mira.

Mira. Yet, to those two vain empty Things you owe two the greatest Pleasures of your Life.

Mil. How so?

Mira. To your Lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves prais'd; and to an Echo the Pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

Wit. But I know a Lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an Echo fair Play; she has that everlasting Rotation of Tongue that an Echo must wait 'till she dies, before it can catch her last Words.

Mil. O Fiction! *Fainall*, let us leave these Men.

Mira. Draw off *Witwoud*. (*Aside to Mrs. Fainall.*

Mrs. Fain. Immediately. I have a Word or two for Mr. *Witwoud*.

SCENE V.

Millamant, Mirabell, Mincing.

Mira. I would beg a little private Audience too—You had the Tyranny to deny me last Night; tho' you knew I came to impart a Secret to you that concern'd my Love.

Mil. You saw I was engag'd.

Mira. Unkind. You had the Leisure to entertain a herd of Fools; Things that visit you from their excessive Idleness; bestowing on your Easiness that Time, which is the incumbrance of their Lives. How can you find Delight in such Society? It is impossible they shou'd admire you, they are not capable: Or if they were, it shou'd be to you as a Mortification; for sure to please a Fool is some degree of Folly.

Mil. I please myself—Besides, sometimes to converse with Fools is for my Health.

Mira. Your Health! is there a worse Disease than the Conversation of Fools?

Mil. Yes the Vapours; Fools are Physick for it, next to *Assa-Fetida*.

Mira. You are not in a Course of Fools?

Mil. *Mirabell*, if you persist in this offensive Freedom—you'll displease me—I think I must resolve after all, not to have you—We shan't agree.

Mira. Not in our Physick, it may be.

Mil. And yet our Distemper in all likelihood will be the

the same ; for we shall be sick of one another. I shan't endure to be reprimanded, nor instructed ; 'tis so dull to act always by Advice, and so tedious to be told of one's Faults—I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you *Mirabell*—I'm resolv'd—I think—You may go——Ha, ha, ha. What wou'd you give that you cou'd help loving me ?

Mira. I wou'd give something that you did not know I cou'd not help it.

Mil. Come, don't look grave then. Well, what do you say to me ?

Mira. I say that a Man may as soon make a Friend by his Wit, or a Fortune by his Honesty, as win a Woman with Plain-dealing and Sincerity.

Mil. Sententious *Mirabell* ! Prithee don't look with that violent and inflexible wise Face, like *Solomon* at the dividing of the Child in an old Tapestry Hanging.

Mira. You are merry, Madam, but I would persuade you for a Moment to be serious.

Mil. What, with that Face ? No, if you keep your Countenance, 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well after all, there is something very moving in a lovesick Face, Ha, ha, ha—Well I won't laugh ! don't be peevish——Heigho ! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a Watch-light. Well *Mirabell*, if ever you will win me woo me now——Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well ;——I see they are walking away.

Mira. Can you not find in the Variety of your Disposition one Moment.——

Mil. To hear you tell me *Faible's* married and your Plot like to speed—No.

Mira. But how you came to know it——

Mil. Without the Help of the devil, you can't imagine ; unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider ; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me.

SCENE VI.

Mirabell alone.

Mira. I have something more—Gone—Think of you ! To think of a Whirlwind, tho' 'twere in a Whirlwind, were a Case of more steady Contemplation ; a
very

very tranquillity of Mind and Mansion. A Fellow that lives in a Windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than the Heart of a Man that is lodg'd in a Woman. There is no Point of the Compass to which they cannot turn and by which they are not turn'd ; and by one as well as another : For Motion not Method is their Occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in Love, is to be made wise from the dictates of Reason, and yet persevere to play the Fool by the Force of Instinct--- O here comes my Pair of Turtles---What, billing so sweetly ! Is not *Valentine's Day* over with you yet ?

SCENE VII.

(to him) Waitwell, Foible.

Mira. Sirrah, *Waitwell*, why sure you think you were marry'd for your own Recreation, and not for my Convenience.

Wait. Your Pardon, Sir. With submission, we have indeed been solacing in lawful Delights ; but still with an Eye to Business, Sir. I have instructed her as well as I could, If she can take your Directions as readily as my Instructions, Sir, your Affairs are in a prosperous Way.

Mira. Give you Joy, Mrs. *Foible*.

Foi. O-las, Sir, I'm so ashamed-----I'm afraid my Lady has been in a thousand Inquietudes for me. But I protest, Sir, I made as much haste as I could.

Wait. That she did indeed, Sir. It was my Fault that she did not make more.

Mira. That I believe.

Foi. But I told my Lady as you instructed me, Sir, That I had a prospect of seeing Sir *Rowland* your Uncle ; and that I would put her Ladyship's Picture in my Pocket to shew him ; which I'll be sure to say has made him so enamour'd of her Beauty, that he burns with impatience to lye at her Ladyship's Feet, and worship the Original.

Mira. Excellent *Foible* ! Matrimony has made you eloquent in Love.

Wait. I think she has profited, Sir. I think so.

Foi. You have seen Madam Millamant, Sir ?

Mira. Yes.

Foi. I told her, Sir, because I did not know that you
might

might find an Opportunity, she had so much Company last Night.

Mira. Your Diligence will merit more—In the mean time. *(gives money)*

Foi. O dear Sir, your humble Servant.

Wait. Spouse.

Mira. Stand off Sir, not a penny—Go on and prosper, *Foible*—The Lease shall be made good and the Farm stock'd, if we succeed.

Foi. I don't question your Generosity, Sir: and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, Sir, I'll be gone; I'm sure my Lady is at her Toilet, and can't dress 'till I come,—O dear, I'm sure that *(Looking out)* was Mrs. Marwood that went by in a Mask; if she has seen me with you I'm sure she will tell my Lady. I'll make Haste home and prevent her. Your Servant, Sir. B'w'y *Waitwell*.

SCENE VIII.

Mirabell, Waitwell.

Wait. Sir *Rowland*, if you please. The Jade's so perr upon her preferment she forgets herself.

Mira. Come, Sir, will you endeavour to forget yourself—and transform into Sir *Rowland*.

Wait. Why Sir; it will be impossible I should remember myself—Marry'd, knighted and attended all in one Day! 'Tis enough to make any man forget himself. The Difficulty will be how to recover my Acquaintance and Familiarity with my former self; and fall from my Transformation to a Reformation into *Waitwell*. Nay I shan't be quite the same *Waitwell* neither—for now I remember me, I'm marry'd, and can't be my own Man again.

*Ay, there's my Grief, that's the sad change of Life:
To lose my Title, and yet keep my Wife.*

A C T

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in Lady Wishfort's House.

Lady Wishfort at her Toilet, Peg waiting.

Lady *Wish.* **M**erciful! no News of *Foible* yet?

Peg. No, Madam.

Lady *Wish.* I have no more Patience——If I have not fretted myself 'till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me. Fetch me the Red——the Red, do you hear, Sweet-heart? An errant Ash-Colour, as I am a Person, Look you how this Wench stirs! Why dost thou not fetch me a little Red? Didst thou not hear me, Mopus?

Peg. The Red *Ratafia* does your Ladyship mean, or the Cherry-Brandy?

Lady *Wish.* *Ratafia*, Fool. Not the *Ratafia* Fool—Grant me Patience! I mean the *Spanish* Paper, Idiot, Complexion Darling. Paint, Paint, Paint, dost thou understand that, changeling, dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee? Why dost thou not stir, Puppet? thou wooden Thing upon Wires.

Peg. Lord, Madam, your Ladyship is so impatient—I cannot come at the Paint. Madam, Mrs *Foible* has lock'd it up, and carry'd the Key with her.

Lady *Wish.* Pox take you both——Fetch me the Cherry-Brandy then.

SCENE II.

Lady *Wish.* I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. *Qualmsick* the Curate's Wife, that's always breeding——Wench, come, come, Wench, what art thou doing, Sipping? Tasting? Save thee, dost thou not know the Bottle?

SCENE III.

Lady Wishfort, Peg with a Bottle and China Cup.

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a Cup.

Lady

Lady Wisb. A Cup, save thee, and what a Cup hast thou brought! Dost thou take me for a *Fairy*, to drink out of an *Accorn*? Why dost thou not bring thy thimble? Hast thou ne'er a Brass Thimble, clinking in thy Pocket with a bit of Nutmeg? I warrant thee, Come, fill, fill.—So—again See what that is—(One knocks.) Set down the Bottle first. Here, under the Table—What, wou'd thou go with the Bottle in thy Hand like a Tapster. As I'm a person, this Wench has liv'd in an Inn upon the Road, before she came to me, like *Maritornes*, the *Austrian* in *Don Quixot*. No *Foible* yet?

Peg. No Madam, Mrs. *Marwood*.

Lady Wisb. O *Marwood*, let her come in. Come in good *Marwood*.

SCENE IV.

(To them) Mrs. *Marwood*.

Mrs. Mar. I'm surpriz'd to find your Ladyship in *disabille* at this time of Day.

Lady Wisb. *Foible's* a lost thing, has been abroad since Morning, and never heard of since.

Mar. I saw her but now, as I came mask'd thro' the Park, in Conference with *Mirabell*.

Lady Wisb. With *Mirabell*? You call my Blood into my Face, with mentioning that Traitor. She durst not have the Confidence. I sent her to negotiate an Affair, in which if I'm detected I'm undone. If that wheedling Villain has wrought upon *Foible* to detect me, I'm ruin'd. Oh my dear Friend, I'm a Wretch of Wretches if I'm detected.

Mar. O Madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. *Foible's* Integrity.

Lady Wisb. O, he carries Poison in his Tongue that wou'd corrupt integrity itself. If she has given him an Opportunity, she has as good as put her Integrity into his Hand. Ah dear *Marwood*, what's Integrity to an Opportunity?—Hark! I hear her—Dear Friend retire into my Closet, that I may examine her with more Freedom—You'll pardon me, dear Friend, I can make bold with you—There are Books over the Chimney—*Quarles* and *Pryn*, and the *Short View of the Stage*, with *Bunyan's Works*, to entertain you—Go, you Thing, and send her in. (To *Peg*.)

SCENE

SCENE V.

Lady Wishfort, Foible.

Lady Wish. O *Foible*, where hast thou been? what hast thou been doing?

Foi. Madam, I have seen the Party.

Lady Wish. But what hast thou done?

Foi. Nay, 'tis your Ladyship has done, and are to do; I have only promis'd. But a Man so enamour'd—so transported! Well, if worshipping of Pictures be a Sin—Poor Sir *Rowland*, I say.

Lady Wish. The miniature has been counted like—But hast thou not betray'd me *Foible*? Hast thou not detected me to that faithless *Mirabell*?—what hadst thou to do with him in the Park? Answer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foi. So, the Devil has been before-hand with me? what shall I say?—Alas, Madam, could I help it, if I met that confident Thing? Was I in fault? If you had heard how he us'd me, and all upon your Ladyship's Account, I'm sure you wou'd not suspect my Fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst I cou'd have born: But he had a Fling at your Ladyship too: and then I cou'd not hold: But, faith I gave him his own.

Lady Wish. Me? what did the filthy Fellow say?

Foi. O Madam, 'tis a Shame to say what he said—With his Taunts and his Fleers, tossing up his Nose. *Humb* (says he) what you are a hatching some Plot (says he) you are so early abroad, or catering (says he) ferrying for some disbanded Officer, I warrant—Half Pay is but thin Subsistence (says he)—Well what Pension does your Lady propose? Let me see (says he) what she must come down pretty deep now, she's superannuated (says he) and—

Lady Wish. Ods my Life, I'll have him, I'll have him murder'd. I'll have him poison'd. Where does he eat? I'll marry a Drawer to have him poison'd in his Wine. I'll send for *Robin* from *Locker's*—immediately.

Foi. Poison him? Poisoning's too good for him. Starve him, Madam, starve him, marry Sir *Rowland*, and get him disinherited. O you wou'd bless yourself, to hear what he said.

Lady

Lady Wisb. A Villain ! superannuated !

Foi. Humh (says he) I hear you are laying Designs against me too (says he) and Mrs. *Millamant* is to marry my Uncle ; (he does not suspect a Word of your Ladyship) but (says he) I'll fit you for that, I warrant you (says he) I'll hamper you for that (says he) you and your old Frippery too (says he) I'll handle you—

Lady Wisb. Audacious Villain ! handle me, would he durst——Frippery ? Old Frippery ! Was there ever such a foul-mouth'd Fellow ? I'll be marry'd to-morrow, I'll be contracted to-night.

Foi. The sooner the better, Madam.

Lady Wisb. Will Sir *Rowland* be here, say'st thou ? when, *Foible* ?

Foi. Incontinently, Madam. No new Sheriff's Wife expects the Return of her Husband after Knighthood, with that Impatience in which Sir *Rowland* burns for the dear Hour of kissing your Ladyship's Hand after Dinner.

Lady Wisb. Frippery ! superannuated Frippery ! I'll Frippery the Villain ; I'll reduce him to Frippery and rags : A Tatterdemalion —— I hope to see him hung with Tatters, like a *Long Lane* Pent-house, or a Gibbet-thief. A slender-mouth'd Railer : I warrant the Spendthrift Prodigal's in Debt as much as the Million Lottery, or the whole Court upon a Birth-Day. I'll spoil his Credit with his Taylor. Yes, he shall have my Niece with her Fortune, he shall.

Foi. He ! I hope to see him lodge in *Ludgate* first, and angle into *Black-Fryars* for Brass Farthings, with an old Mitten.

Lady Wisb. Ay dear *Foible* ; thank thee for that, dear *Foible*. He has put me out of all Patience. I shall never recompense my Features, to receive Sir *Rowland* with any Oeconomy of Face. This Wretch has fretted me that I am absolutely decay'd. Look, *Foible*,

Foi. Your Ladyship has frown'd a little too rashly, indeed Madam. There are some Cracks discernable in the white Varnish.

Lady Wisb. Let me see the Glass——Cracks say'st thou ? Why I am arrantly flea'd——I look like an old peel'd Wall. Thou must repair me, *Foible*, before Sir

Row-

Rowland comes ; or I shall never keep up to my Picture.

Fai. I warrant you, Madam ; a little Art once made your Picture like you ; and now a little of the same Art must make you like your Picture. Your Picture must sit for you, Madam.

Lady Wish. But art thou sure Sir *Rowland* will not fail to come ? Or will he not fail when he does come ? Will he be importunate, *Foible*, and push ? For if he should not be importunate—I shall never break Decorums—I shall die with Confusion, if I am forced to advance——Oh no, I can never advance——I shall swoon if he should expect Advance. No, I hope Sir *Rowland* is better bred, than to put a Lady to the Necessity of breaking her Forms. I won't be too coy neither——I won't give him Despair——But a little Disdain is not amiss ; a little Scorn is alluring.

Fai. A little Scorn becomes your Ladyship.

Lady Wish. Yes, but Tenderness becomes me best—A Sort of a Dyingness——You see that Picture has a Sort of a——Ha *Foible* ? A Swimmingness in the Eyes——Yes, I'll look so——My Niece affects it ? but she wants Features. Is Sir *Rowland* handsome ? Let my Toilet be remov'd——I'll dress above—I'll receive Sir *Rowland* here. Is he handsome ? Don't answer me. I won't know : I'll be surpriz'd ; I'll be taken by Surprise.

Fai. By Storm, Madam. Sir *Rowland*'s a brisk Man.

Lady Wish. Is he ! O then he'll importune, if he's a brisk Man. I shall save Decorums if Sir *Rowland* importunes. I have a mortal Terror at the Apprehension of offending against Decorums. O I'm glad he's a brisk Man. Let my Things be remov'd, good *Foible*.

SCENE VI.

Mrs. Fainall, *Foible*.

Mrs. *Fain.* O *Foible*, I have been in a Fright, lest I shou'd come too late. That Devil, *Marwood*, saw you in the Park with *Mirabell*, and I'm afraid will discover it my Lady.

Fai. Discover what, Madam ?

Mrs. *Fain.* Nay, nay, put not on that strange Face. I am privy to the whole Design, and know that *Waitwell*,

to whom thou wert this Morning marry'd, is to perfonate *Mirabell's* Uncle, and as fuch, winning my Lady, to involve her in thofe Difficulties from which *Mirabell* only muft releafe her, by his making his Conditions to have my Coufin and her Fortune left to her own Difpofal.

Fai. O dear Madam, I beg your Pardon. It was not my Confidence in your Ladyship that was deficient; but I thought the former good Correfpondence between your Ladyship and Mr. *Mirabell*, might have hinder'd his communicating this Secret.

Mrs. Fain. Dear *Foible*, forget that.

Fai. O dear Madam, Mr. *Mirabell* is fuch a fweet winning Gentleman—But your Ladyship is the Pattern of Generofity.—Sweet Lady, to be fo good! Mr. *Mirabell* cannot chufe but be grateful. I find your Ladyship has his Heart ftill. Now, Madam, I can fafely tell your Ladyship our Succefs. *Mrs. Marwood* had told my Lady; but I warrant I manag'd myfelf. I turn'd it all for the better. I told my Lady that Mr. *Mirabell* rail'd at her. I laid horrid Things to his Charge, I'll vow; and my Lady is fo incens'd, that fhe'll be contracted to Sir *Rowland* to-night, fhe fays;—I'd warrant I work her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they fay of a *Welsh* Maiden-head.

Mrs. Fain. O rare *Foible*!

Fai. Madam, I beg your Ladyship to acquaint Mr. *Mirabell* of his Succefs. I would be feen as little as poffible to fpeak to him—befides, I believe Madam *Marwood* watches me—She has a Month's Mind; but I know Mr. *Mirabell* can't abide her—(*Calls*) *John*—remove my Lady's Toilet. Madam, your Servant. My Lady is fo impatient, I fear fhe'll come for me, if I ftay.

Mrs. Fain. I'll go with you up the back Stairs, left I fhould meet her.

SCENE VII.

Mrs. Marwood alone.

Indeed, *Mrs. Engine*, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? Yes, I fhall watch you. Why this Wench is the *Pass-partoute*, a very Master-key to every Body's ftrong box. My Friend *Fainall*, have you carry'd it fo fwimmingly? I thought thee

there was something in it; but it seems it's over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of Appetite then, but from a Surfeit. Else you could never be so cool to fall from a Principal to be an Assistant; to procure for him! A Pattern of Generosity, that I confess. Well, Mr. Fainall, you have met with your Match.——O Man, Man! Woman, Woman! the Devil's an Ass: If I were a Painter, I would draw him like an Ideot, a Driveller with a Bib and Bells. Man should have his Head and Horns, and Woman the rest of him. Poor simple Fiend! Madam *Marwood* has a Month's Mind, but he can't abide her——'Twere better for him you had not been his Confessor in that Affair; without you could have kept his Council closer. I shall not prove another Pattern of Generosity——he has not oblig'd me to that with those excesses of himself; and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good Lady, panting ripe; with a Heart full of Hope, and a Head full of Care, like any Chymist upon the Day of Projection.

SCENE VIII.

(To her) *Lady Wishfort.*

Lady Wish. O dear *Marwood*, what shall I say for this rude Forgetfulness——But my dear Friend is at Goodness.

Mar. No Apologies, dear Madam! I have been very well entertain'd.

Lady Wish. As I am a Person I am in a very Chaos to think I should so forget myself——But I have such an Olio of Affairs, really I know not what to do——

(Calls)——*Foible*——I expect my Nephew Sir *Wilfull* ev'ry Moment too:——Why *Foible*——He means to travel for Improvement.

Mar. Methinks Sir *Wilfull* shou'd rather think of marrying than travelling at his Years. I hear he is turn'd of forty.

Lady Wish. O he's in less Danger of being spoiled by his Travels——I am against my Nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquir'd Discretion to chuse for himself.

Mar. Methinks Mrs. *Millamant* and he would make a very fit Match. He may travel afterwards. 'Tis a Thing very usual with young Gentlemen.

Lady Wisb. I promise you I have thought on't—And since 'tis your Judgment, I'll think on't again. I assure you I will; I value your Judgment extremely. On my Word I'll propose it.

SCENE IX.

(To them) *Foible.*

Lady Wisb. Come, come, *Foible*—I had forgot my Nephew will be here before Dinner—I must make haste.

Fo. Mr. *Witwood* and Mr. *Petulant* are come to dine with your Ladyship.

Lady Wisb. O dear, I can't appear 'till I am dress'd. Dear *Marwood* shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em. I'll make all imaginable Haste. Dear Friend, excuse me.

SCENE X.

Mrs. *Marwood*, Mrs. *Millamant*, *Mincing*.

Mil. Sure never any Thing was so unbred as that odious Man.——*Marwood*, your Servant.

Mar. You have a colour, what's the Matter?

Mil. That horrid Fellow *Petulant* has provok'd me into a Flame—I have broke my Fan——*Mincing*, lend me your's;——Is not all the Powder out of my Hair?

Mar. No. What has he done?

Min. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talk'd—Nay, he has said nothing neither; but he has contradicted ev'ry thing that has been said. For my Part I thought *Witwood* and he wou'd have quarrell'd.

Min. I vow, *Mum*, I thought once they wou'd have fit.

Mil. Well, 'tis a lamentable Thing, I swear, that one has not the Liberty of chusing one's Acquaintance as one does one's cloaths.

Man. If we had that Liberty, we shou'd be as weary of one Set of Acquaintance, tho' never so good, as we are of one Suit, tho' never so fine. A Fool and a Ddily Stuff wou'd grow and then had Days of Grace, and be worn for Variety.

Mil. I could consent to wear 'em, if they cou'd wear alike; but Fools never wear but——They are such *Dray-derry* Things! Without one cou'd give 'em to one's chambermaid after a day or two.

Man.

Mar. 'Twere better so indeed; Or what think you of the Play-house? A fine gay glossy Fool shou'd be given there, like a new masking Habit after the Masquerade is over, and we have done with the Disguise. For a Fool's Visit is always a Disguise; and never admitted by a Woman of Wit, but to blind her Affair with a Lover of Sense. If you wou'd but appear bare-fac'd now, and own *Mirabell*; you might as easily put off *Petulant* and *Witwoud*, as your Hood and Scarf. And indeed 'tis time for the Town has found it: The secret is grown too big for the Pretence: 'Tis like Mrs. *Brimly's* great Belly; she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her Hips. Indeed *Millamant*, you can no more conceal it, than my Lady *Strammel* can her Face, that goodly Face, which in Defiance of her Rhenish-Wine-Tea, will not be comprehended in a Mask.

Mil. I'll take my Death, *Marwood*, you are more censorious than a decay'd Beauty or a discarded Toast. *Mincing*, tell the Men they may come up. My Aunt is not dressing here; their Folly is less provoking than your Malice.

SCENE XI.

Millamant, Marwood.

Mil. The Town has found it! What has it found? That *Mirabell* loves me is no more a Secret, than it is a Secret that you discover'd it to my Aunt, or than the Reason why you discover'd it is a Secret.

Mar. You are nettled.

Mil. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

Mar. Indeed, my Dear, you'll tear another Fan, if you don't mitigate those violent Airs.

Mil. O silly! Ha, ha, ha. I could laugh immoderately. Poor *Mirabell*! His Constancy to me has quite destroy'd his Complaisance for all the World beside. I swear, I never enjoin'd him, to be so coy,——If I had the Vanity to think he wou'd obey me; I wou'd command him to shew more Gallantry—'Tis hardly well bred to be so particular on one Hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own Way. Ha, ha, ha; Pardon me, dear Creature, I must laugh, ha, ha, ha; tho' I grant 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha.

Mar.

Mar. What Pity 'tis, so much fine Rallery, and deliver'd with so significant Gesture, shou'd be so unhappily directed to miscarry.

Mil. Hæ? Dear Creature I ask your Pardon——I swear I did not mind you.

Mar. Mr. *Mirabell* and you both may think a Thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you——

Mil. O dear, what? for it is the same Thing if I hear it——Ha, ha, ha.

Mar. That I detest him, hate him, Madam.

Mil. O Madam, why so do I——And yet the Creature loves me, ha, ha. How can one forbear laughing to think of it——I am a Sybil if I am not amaz'd to think what he can see in me. I'll take my Death, I think you are handsomer——and within a Year or two as young.——If you cou'd but stay for me, I shou'd overtake you——But that cannot be——Well, that Thought makes me melancholick——Now I'll be sad.

Mar. Your merry Note may be changed sooner than you think.

Mil. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolv'd I'll have a Song to keep up my Spirits.

SCENE XII.

(to them) Mincing.

Min. The Gentlemen stay but to comb, Madam, and will wait on you.

Mil. Desire Mrs.——that is in the next Room to sing the Song I wou'd have learnt Yesterday. You shall hear it, Madam——Not that there's any great Matter in it——But 'tis agreeable to my Humour.

SONG.

Set by Mr. John Eccles.

LOVE's but the Frailty of the Mind,
When 'tis not with Ambition join'd;
A sickly Flame, which if not fed expires;
And feeding, wastes in self-consuming Fires.

II. "I is not to wound a wanton Boy

Or am'rous Youth, that gives the Joy ;
But 'tis the Glory to have pierc'd a Swain,
For whom inferior Beauties sigh in vain.

III.

Then I alone the Conquest prize,
When I insult a Rival's Eyes ;
If there's Delight in Love, 'tis when I see
That Heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.

SCENE XIII.

(To them) Petulant, Witwoud.

Mil. Is your Animosity compos'd, Gentlemen ?

Wit. Rallery, Rallery, Madam we have no Ani-
mosity—— We hit off a little Wit now and then, but
no Animosity—— The falling out of Wits is like the
falling out of Lovers—— We agree in the main, like
Treble and Base. Ha, Petulant !

Petu. Ay in the main—— But when I have a Hu-
mour to contradict——

Wit. Ay, when he has a Humour to contradict, then
I contradict too. What, I know my Cue. Then we
contradict one another like two Battle-Dores ; for Con-
tradictions beget one another like Jews.

Petu. If he says Black's Black—— If I have a Humour
to say 'tis Blue—— Let that pass—— All's one
for that. If I have a Humour to prove it, it must be
granted.

Wit. Not positively must—— But it may—— It may.

Petu. Yes, it positively must, upon Proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon Proof positive it must ; but upon
Proof presumptive it only may. That's a Logical Dis-
tinction now, Madam.

Mar. I perceive your Debates are of Importance, and
very learnedly handled.

Petu. Importance is one Thing, and Learning's ano-
ther ; but a Debate's a Debate, that I assert.

Wit. Petulant's an Enemy to Learning ; he relies
altogether on his Parts.

Petu. No, I'm no Enemy to Learning ; it hurts not me.

Mar. That's a Sign indeed its no Enemy to you.

Petu.

Petu. No, no, it's no Enemy to any Body, but them that have it.

Mil. Well, an illiterate Man's my Aversion. I wonder at the Impudence of any illiterate Man, to offer to make Love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Mil. Ah! to marry an Ignorant that can hardly read or write.

Petu. Why shou'd a Man be any further from being marry'd tho' he can't read, than he is from being hang'd: The Ordinary's paid for setting the *Psalm*, and the Parish Priest for reading the Ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow in both Cases, a Man may do it without Book—So all's one for that.

Mil. D'ye hear the Creature? Lord, here's Company, I'll be gone.

S C E N E XIV.

Sir Wilfull Witwoud in a riding Dress Mrs. Marwood, Petulant, Witwoud, Footman.

Wit. In the Name of *Bartlemew* and his Fair, what have we here?

Mar. 'Tis your Brother, I fancy, don't you know him?

Wit. Nor I——Yes, I think it is he——I've almost forgot him; I have not seen him since the Revolution.

Foot. Sir, my Lady's dressing. Here's Company; if you please to walk in, in the mean time.

Sir Wil. Dressing? What, it's but Morning here I warrant with you in *London*; we shou'd count it towards Afternoon in our Parts, down in *Shropshire*——Why then be like my Aunt han't din'd yet——Ha, Friend?

Foot. Your Aunt, Sir?

Sir Wil. My Aunt, Sir? Yes my Aunt, Sir, and your Lady, Sir; your Lady is my Aunt, Sir——Why, what dost thou not know me, Friend? Why then send some Body hither that does. How long hast thou liv'd with thy Lady, Fellow, ha?

Foot. A Week, Sir; longer than any in the House, except my Lady's Woman.

Sir

Sir Wil. Why then belike thou dost not know thy Lady, if thou see'st her, ha, Friend!

Foot. Why, truly Sir, I cannot safely swear to her Face in the morning before she is dress'd. 'Tis like I may give a shrewd Guess at her by this time.

Sir Wil. Well, prythee try what thou can'st do; if thou can'st not guess, inquire her out, do'st hear, Fellow? And tell her, her Nephew, *Sir Wilful Witwoud*, is in the House.

Foot. I shall, Sir.

Sir Wil. Hold ye, hear me, Friend; a Word with you in your Ear: Prythee who are these Gallants?

Foot. Really, Sir, I can't tell; here comes so many here. 'tis hard to know 'em all.

SCENE XV.

Sir Wilful Witwoud, Petulant, Witwoud, Mrs. Marwoud.

Sir Wil. Oons, this Fellow knows less than a Starling; I don't think a' knows his own Name.

Mar. Mr. *Witwoud*, your Brother is not behind-hand in Forgetfulness—I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope so—the Devil take him that remembers first, I say.

Sir Wil. Save you Gentlemen and Lady.

Mar. For shame, Mr. *Witwoud*, why won't you speak to him?—And you, Sir,

Wit. *Petulant*, speak.

Petu. And you, Sir.

Sir Wil. No Offence, I hope. *(Salutes Marwoud.)*

Mar. No sure, Sir.

Wit. This is a vile Dog, I see that already! No Offence! Ha, ha, ha! To him; to him, *Petulant*, smoke him.

Petu. It seems as if you had come a Journey, Sir; hem, hem. *(Surveying him round.)*

Sir Wil. Very likely, Sir, that it may seem so.

Petu. No Offence! I hope, Sir.

Wit. Smoke the Boots, the Boots; *Petulant*, the Boots! Ha, ha, ha.

Sir Wil. May be not, Sir; therefore as 'tis meant, Sir.

Petu. Sir, I presume, upon the Information of, your Boots. Sir

Sir *Wil.* Why, 'tis like you may, Sir: If you are not satisfy'd with the Information of my Boots, Sir, if you will step to the Stable, you may enquire further of my Horse, Sir.

Petu. Your Horse, Sir! Your Horse is an As, Sir!

Sir *Wil.* Do you speak by way of Offence, Sir?

Mar. The Gentleman's merry, that's all, Sir—S'life, we shall have a Quarrel betwixt an Horse and an As, before they find one another out. You must not take any thing amiss from your Friends, Sir. You are among your Friends, here, tho' it may be you don't know it—If I am not mistaken, you are Sir *Wilfull Witwoud*.

Sir *Wil.* Right, Lady, I am Sir *Wilfull Witwoud*, so I write myself; no Offence to any Body; I hope; and Nephew to the Lady *Wishfort* of this Mansion.

Mar. Don't you know this Gentleman, Sir?

Sir *Wil.* Hum! What, sure 'tis not—Yea by'r Lady, but 'tis——Sheart I know not whether 'tis or no——Yea, but 'tis, by the *Rekin*. Brother *Antony*? What *Tony*, i'faith! What dost thou not know me? By'r Lady nor I thee, thou art so becravated, and so beperriwig'd—Sheart why dost not speak? Art thou o'erjoy'd?

Wit. Odsso Brother, is it you? Your Servant, Brother.

Sir *Wil.* Your Servant! Why yours, Sir. Your Servant again——Sheart, and your Friend and Servant to that—And a——(puff) and a Flap Dragon for your Service, Sir: And a Hare's Foot, and a Hare's Scut for your Service, Sir; an you be so cold and so courtly!

Wit. No Offence, I hope, Brother.

Sir *Wil.* Sheart, Sir, but there is, and much Offence—A Pox, is this your Inns o'Court Breeding, not to know your Friends and your Relations, your Elders, and your Betters?

Wit. Why, Brother *Wilfull* of *Salop*, you may be as short as a *Sbrewsbury* Cake, if you please. But I tell you, 'tis not modish to know Relations in Town. You think you're in in the Country, where great lubberly Brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a Call of Serjeants—'Tis not the Fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear Brother.

Sir

Sir Wil. The Fashion's a Fool; and you're a Fop, dear Brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this——By'r Lady I conjectur'd you are a Fop, since you began to change the Stile of your Letters, and write in a Scrap of Paper gilt round the Edges, no bigger than a *Subpœna*. I might expect this when you left off *Honour'd Brother*; and *hoping you are in good Health*, and so forth—To begin with a *Rat me Knight*, I'm so sick of a last Night's *Debauch*—O'ds Heart, and then tell a familiar Tale of a Cock and a Bull, and a Whore and a Bottle, and so conclude——You cou'd write News before you were out of your Time when you liv'd with honest *Pimple-Nose* the Attorney of *Furnival's Inn*——You cou'd intreat to be remember'd then to your Friends round the *Rekin*. We cou'd have *Gazettes* then and *Darwk's Letter*, and the weekly Bill, 'till of late Days.

Petu. 'Slife, *Witwoud*, were you ever an Attorney's Clerk? Of the Family of the *Furnival's*. Ha, ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was but for a while. Not long, not long; psha, I was not in my own Power then. An Orphan, and this Fellow was my Guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that, Man, to come to *London*. He had the Disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound Prentice to a Felt-maker in *Screwsbury*; this Fellow would have bound me to a Maker of Felts.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart and better than to be bound to a Maker of Pops; where I suppose, you have serv'd your Time; and now you may set up for yourself.

Mar. You intend to travel, Sir, as I'm inform'd.

Sir Wil. Belike I may, Madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt Seas, if my Mind hold.

Petu. And the Wind serve.

Sir Wil. Serve or not serve, I shan't ask Licence of you, Sir; nor the Weather-Cock your Companion. I direct my Discourse to the Lady Sir; 'Tis like my Aunt may have told you, Madam——Yes, I have settl'd my Concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see Foreign Parts. If any how that the Peace holds, whereby that is Taxes abate.

Mar.

Mar. I thought you had design'd for *France* at all Adventures.

Sir Wil. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a Resolution.—because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand still I, shall I, then; if I say't, I'll do it: But I have Thoughts to tarry a small Matter in Town, to learn somewhat of your *Lingo* first, before I cross the Seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your *French* as they say, whereby to hold Discourse in foreign Countries.

Mar. Here's an Academy in Town for that Use.

Sir Wil. There is? 'Tis like there may.

Mar. No Doubt but you will return much improv'd.

Wit. Yes, refin'd like a *Dutch Skipper* from a Whale-fishing.

SCENE XVI.

(to them) *Lady Wishfort, and Fainall.*

Lady Wish. Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your Servant.

Fain. Sir *Witful* your most faithful Servant.

Sir Wil. Cousin *Fainall*, give me your Hand.

Lady Wish. Cousin *Witwoud*, your Servant; Mr *Petulant*, your Servant——Nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink any Thing after your Journey, Nephew, before you eat? Dinner's almost ready.

Sir Wil. I'm very well I thank you, Aunt——However I thank you for your courteous Offer. 'Sheart I was afraid you wou'd have been in the Fashion too, and have remember'd to have forgot your Relations. Here's your Cousin *Tony*, belike, I mayn't call him Brother for fear of Offence.

Lady Wish. O he's a Rallier Nephew——My Cousin's a Wit: And your great Wits always rally their best Friends to chuse. When you have been abroad, Nephew, you'll understand Rallery better.

(*Fain, and Mrs. Mar woud talk apart.*)

Sir Wil. Why then let him hold his Tongue in the mean Time; and rail when that Day comes.

SCENE.

SCENE XVII.

(To them.) *Mimic.*

Mimic. Mem, I am come to acquaint your Ladyship that Dinner is impatient.

Sir Wil. Impatient? Why then belike it won't stay 'till I pull off my Boots. Sweet heart, can you help me to a pair of Slippers?—My Man's with his Horses, I warrant.

Lady Wils. Fie, fie, Nephew, you would not pull off your Boots here—Go down into the Hall—Dinner shall stay for you—My Nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, Madam.—Gentlemen; will you walk? *Marwood.*

Mar. I'll follow you, Madam.—Before Sir *Wilsfull* is ready.

SCENE XVIII.

Mrs. Marwood, Fainall.

Fain. Why, then *Feible's* a Bawd, an Errant, Rank, Match-making Bawd. And I it seems am a Husband, a Rank Husband; and my Wife a very Errant, Rank-wife, —all in the Way of the World. 'Sdeath I to be a Cuckold by Anticipation, a Cuckold in Embrio? Sure I was born with budding Antlers like a young Satyr, or a Citizen's Child. 'Sdeath I to be out-witted, to be out-jilted, —out-matrimony'd, —If I had kept my Speed like a Stag, I were somewhat —but to crawl after, with my Horns like a Snail, and be outstripp'd by my Wife —'tis *Curvy Wedlock*.

Mar. Then shake it off; you have often wish'd for an Opportunity to part; —and now you have it. But first prevent their Plot; —the half of *Millicent's* Fortune is too considerable to be parted with, to a Foe, to *Mirabell*.

Fain. Damn him, that had been mine — had you not made that fond Discovery — That had been forfeited, had they been married. My Wife had added Lustre to my Horns by that Exercise of Fortune. I could have worn a cap with Gold, tho' my Forehead had been smask'd like a Deputy Lieutenant's Hilt.

Mar. They may prove a Cur of Maintenance to you still, if you can away with your Wife. And she's no

worse than when you had her— I dare swear she had given up her Game before she was marry'd.

Fain. Hum! That may be—

Mar. You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected; why shou'd you not keep her longer than you intended?

Fain. The Means, the means.—

Mar. Discover to my Lady your Wife's Conduct; threaten to part with her— My Lady loves her, and will come to any Composition to save her Reputation. Take the Opportunity of breaking it, just upon the Discovery of this Imposture. My Lady will be enrag'd beyond Bounds, and sacrifice Niece, and Fortune, and all at that Conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm; if she should flag in her Part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. Faith, this has an Appearance.

Mar. I'm sorry I hinted to my Lady to endeavour a Match between *Millamant* and *Sir Wilful*, that may be an Obstacle.

Fain. O for that Matter leave me to manage him; I'll disable him for that, he'll drink like a *Dane*, after Dinner, I'll set his Hand in—

Mar. Well, how do you stand affected towards your Lady?

Fain. Why faith I'm thinking of it— Let me see— I am married already; so that's over—

My Wife has play'd the Jades with me— Well, that's over too— I never lov'd her, or if I had, why that wou'd have been over too by this Time— jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; so there's an end of jealousy. Weary of her I am and shall be— No, there's no end of that; No, no, that were too much to hope— Thus far concerning my Repose— Now for my Reputation—

As to my own, I married not for it; so that's out of the Question— And as to my Part in my Wife's— Why she has parted with her's before; so bringing none to me, she cannot take none from me; 'tis against all Rule of Physick that I should take to one, who has not wherewithal to take—

Mar. Besides you forget, Marriage is honourable.

Fain. Hum! faith and that's well thought on; Marriage is honourable, as you say; and if so, wherefore should Cuckoldom be a Discredit, being derived from so honourable a Root?

Mar. Nay I know not; if the Root be Honourable; why not the Branches?

Fain. So, so, why this Point's clear. — Well, how do we proceed?

Mar. I will contrive a Letter which shall be deliver'd to my Lady, at the Time when that Rascal who is to act *Sir Rowland* is with her. It shall come as from an unknown Hand — for the less I appear to know of the Truth, the better I can play the Incendiary. Besides, I wou'd not have *Faible* provok'd, if I cou'd help it. — because you know she knows some Passages — Nay I expect all will come out — But let the Mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am discover'd.

Fain. If the worst come to the worst — I'll turn my Wife to Grass — I have already a Deed of Settlement of the best Part of her Estate; which I wheedled out of her; and that you shall partake at last.

Mar. I hope you are convinc'd that I hate *Mirabell* now: You'll be no more jealous.

Fain. Jealous, no, — by this Kiss — let Husbands be jealous; but let the Lover still believe: Or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his Pleasure, and prepare the Joy that follows, when he finds his Mistress true. But let Husbands Doubts convert to endless Jealousy; or if they have Belief, let it corrupt to Superstition, and blind Credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the Badge, but I'll disown the Order. And since I take my Leave of 'em, I care not if I leave a common Motto to their common Crest.

— All Husbands must, or Pain, or Shame endure;

— The Wife too jealous are, Fools too secure.

ACT

ACT IV SCENE I

(SCENE continues.)

Lady Wishfort and Foible.

Lady Wish. **I**S Sir Rowland coming, say'st thou, *Foible?* and are Things in Order?

Foi. Yes, Madam, I have put Wax-lights in the Sconces, and plac'd the Footmen in a Row in the Hall, in their best Liveries, with the Coachman and Postilion to fill up the Equipage.

Lady Wish. Have you pulvill'd the Coachman and Postilion, that they may not sink of the Stable, when Sir Rowland comes by?

Foi. Yes, Madam.

Lady Wish. And are the Dancers and the Musick ready, that he may be entertain'd in all Points with Correspondence to his Passion.

Foi. All is ready, Madam.

Lady Wish. And—well—and how do I look *Foible?*

Foi. Most killing well, Madam.

Lady Wish. Well, and, how shall I receive him? In what Figure shall I give his Heart the first Impression? There is a great deal in the first Impression. Shall I sit? — No I won't sit — I'll walk — ay I'll walk from the Door upon his Entrance, and then turn full upon him — No, that will be too sudden. I'll lye — ay, I'll lye down — I'll receive him in my little Dressing Room. There's a Couch — Yes, yes, I'll give the first Impression on a Couch — I won't lye neither, but loll and lean upon one Elbow, with one Foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful Way — Yes, — and then as soon as he appears, start, ay, start and be surpriz'd, and rise to meet him in a pretty Disorder — Yet — O, nothing is more alluring than a Levee from a Couch in such Confusion — It shews the Foot to Advantage, and furnishes with Blushes, and recomposing Airs beyond Comparison. Hark! There's a Coach.

Foi.

Fai. 'Tis he, Madam.

Lady *Wish*. O dear, has my Nephew made his Adresses to *Millamant*? I order'd him.

Fai. Sir *Wishful* is set in to Drinking, Madam, in the Parlour.

Lady *Wish*. Ods my Life, I'll send him to her. Call her down, *Foible*; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go. When they are together, then come to me, *Foible*, that I may not be too long with Sir *Rowland*.

SCENE II.

Mrs. *Millamant*, Mrs. *Fainall*, *Foible*.

Fai. Madam, I stay'd here to tell your Ladyship that Mr. *Mirabel* has waited this half Hour for an Opportunity to talk with you. Tho' my Lady's Orders were to leave you and Sir *Wishful* together. Shall I tell Mr. *Mirabel* that you are at leisure?

Mil. No—what would the dear Man have? I am thoughtful, and would amuse myself. Bid him come another time.

*There never yet was woman made,
Nor shall, but to be cur'd.* (Repeating and walking about.)

That's hard!

Mrs. *Fain*. You are very fond of Sir *John Suckling* to-day *Millamant* and the Poets.

Mil. He? Ay, and filthy verses——so I am.

Fai. Sir *Wishful* is coming, Madam. Shall I send Mr. *Mirabel* away?

Mil. Ay, if you please, *Foible* send him away.

Or send him hither,——just as you will, dear *Foible*.

I think I'll see him——Shall I? Ay, let the wretch come.

Thyris, a Youth of the inspired Train.

Dear Fainall, enter'd in Sir Wishful's—Thou hast Philosophy to undergo a Fool; thou art married and hast Patience.—I would confer with my own Thoughts.

Fain. I am oblig'd to you, that you would make me your Proxy in this Affair; but I have Business of my own.

SCENE III.

(To them), Sir Willfull.

Mrs. Fain. O Sir Willful, you are come at the critical Instant. There's your Mistress up to the Ears in Love and Contemplation; pursue your Point, now or never.

Sir Wil. Yes; my Aunt will have it so,----I would gladly have been encourag'd with a Bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first before I am acquainted;—But I hope, after a Time, I shall break my Mind—that is, upon further Acquaintance.——So for the present, Cousin, I'll take my Leave—If so be you'll be so kind to make my Excuse, I'll return to my Company.——

(This while Milla. walks about repeating to herself.

Mrs. Fain. O fie, Sir Willfull! what you must not be daunted.

Sir Wil. Daunted, no, that's not it, it is not so much for that——for if so be that I set on's, I'll do't. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient. 'till further Acquaintance, that's all---your Servant.

Mrs. Fain. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose a favourable Opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the Door.

SCENE IV.

Sir Willfull, Millamant.

Sir Wil. Nay, why, Cousin, I have forgot my Gloves.——What d'ye do? 'Sheart a' has lock'd the Door indeed,——I think——Nay, Cousin Fainall, open the Door.——Pshaw, what a Vixen Trick is this?—Nay, now, a' has teen me too—Cousin, I made bold to pass thro' as it were—I think this Door's enchanted.

Milla. (repeating)

*I prythee spare me, gentle Boy,
prestime no more for that slight Toy.*

Sir Wil. Anan? Cousin, your Servant.

Milla. *That foolish Trifle of a Heart*

Sir Wilful. I

Sir Wil. Yes—your Servant. No Offence, I hope, Cousin.

Milla

Milla. (repeating)

I swear it will not do its Part,

The thou dost ibine, employ'st thy Power and Art!

Natural, easy Suckling!

Sir Wil. Anan? Suckling? No such Suckling neither Cousin, nor Strippling: I thank Heaven I am no Minor.

Mil. Ah Ruslick ruder than Gothick.

Sir Wil. Well, well, I shall understand your Lingo one of these Days, Cousin, in the mean Time I must answer in plain English.

Mil. Have you any Business with me Sir Wilf.?

Sir Wil. Not at present, Cousin—Yes, I made bold to see, to come and know if that how you were dispos'd to fetch a Walk this Evening, if so be that I might not be troublesome. I would have sought a Walk with you.

Mil. A Walk? What then?

Sir Wil. Nay nothing—Only for the Walk's Sake that's all.

Mil. I nauseate Walking; 'tis a Country Diversion; I loath the Country and every Thing that relates to it.

Sir Wil. Indeed! Hah! look ye, look ye, you do? Nay, 'tis like you may—Here are choice of Pastimes here in Town as Plays and the like, that must be confess'd indeed.

Mil. Ah Satourdie! I hate the Town too.

Sir Wil. Dear Heart, that's much—Hah! that you should hate em both! Hah! 'tis like you may; there are some can't relish the Town, and other's can't away with the Country, 'tis like you may be one of those, Cousin.

Mil. Ha, ha, ha. Yes, 'tis like I may.

You have nothing farther to say to me?

Sir Wil. Not at present, Cousin—'Tis like when I have an Opportunity to be more private,—I may break my Mind in some Measure—I conjecture you partly guess—However that's as Time shall try,—But spare to speak and spare to speed, as they say.

Mil. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilf., you will oblige me to leave you: I have just now a little Business.

Sir

Sir Wil. Enough, enough, Cousin: Yes, yes, all's a case — When you're dispos'd. Now's as well as another Time; and another Time as well as now. All's one for that — Yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste; it will keep cold, as they say. — Cousin, your Servant. — I think this Door's lock'd.

Mil. You may go this way, Sir.

Sir Wil. Your Servant, then with your leave I'll return to my Company.

Mil. Ay, ay; ha, ha, ha.

Like Pæcebus sung the no less am'rous Boy

SCENE V.

Millamant, Mirabell.

Mira. *Like Daphne she as lovely and as coy.*

Do you lock yourself up from me, to make my Search more curious? Or is this pretty Artifice contriv'd to signify that here the Chace must end, and my Pursuit be crown'd, for you can fly no further? —

Mil. Vanity! No — I'll fly and be followed to the last Moment, tho' I'm upon the very Verge of Matrimony, I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the Gate of a Monastery, with one foot over the Treshold. I'll be solicited to the very last, nay afterwards.

Mira. What, after the last?

Mil. O, I should think I was poor and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduc'd to an inglorious Estate; and free from the agreeable Fatigues of Solicitation.

Mira. But do you not know, that when Favours are upon instant and tedious Solicitations, that they diminish in their Value, and t. at both the Giver loses the Grace, and the Receiver lessens his Pleasure?

Mil. It may be in Things of common Application; but never sure in Love. O, I hate a Lover, that can dare to think he can draw a moment's Air, independent on the Bounty of his Mistress. There is not so imprudent a Thing in Nature, as the saucy look of an assured Man, confident of Success. The Pedantic Arrogance of a very Husband, has not so pragmatical an Air. Ah! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my Will and Pleasure.

Mira

Mira. Would you have 'em both before Marriage? Or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for the other till after Grace?

Mil. Ah! don't be impertinent—My dear Liberty, shall I leave thee? My faithful Solitude, my darling Contemplation, must I bid you then Adieu? Ay—h adieu—My morning Thoughts, agreeable Wakings, indolent Slumbers, ye *douceurs*, ye *Sommellis du Matin*, adieu—I can't do't, 'tis more than impossible—Positively *Mirabell*, I'll lye a-bed in a Morning as long as I please,

Mira. Then I'll get up in a Morning as early as I please.

Mil. Ah! Idle Creature, get up when you will—And d'ye hear, I won't be call'd names after I'm marry'd; positively I won't be call'd Names.

Mira. Names?

Mil. Ay, as Wife, Spouse, my Dear, Joy, Jewel, Love, Sweet-heart, and the rest of that nauseous Cant, in which Men and their Wives are so fulsomly familiar—I shall never bear that—Good *Mirabell*, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before Folks, like my Lady Fidler and Sir Francis: Nor go to *Hide-Park* together the first Sunday in a new Chariot, to provoke Eyes and Whispers; and then never be seen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the first Week; and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together nor go to a play together, but let us be very strange, and well bred: Let us be as strange as if we had been marry'd a great while and as well bred as if we were not marry'd at all.

Mira. Have you any more Conditions to offer? Hitherto your Demands are pretty reasonable.

Mil. Trifles.——As Liberty to pay and receive Visits to and from whom I please; to write and receive Letters, without Interrogatories or wry Faces on your Part; to wear what I please and chuse Conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no Obligation upon me to converse with Wits that I don't like, because they are your Acquaintance; or to be intimate with Fools, because they may be your Relations. Come to dinner when I please, dine in my dressing-Room when I'm out of Humour, without giving a Reason. To have

have my Closet inviolate; to be sole Empress of my Tea-Table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, where-ever I am, you shall always knock at the Door before you come in. These Articles subscrib'd, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a Wife.

Mira. Your Bill of Fare is something advanc'd in this latter Account. Well, have I liberty to offer Conditions — That when you are dwindled into a Wife, I may not be beyond Measure enlarg'd in a Husband?

Mil. You have free leave, propose your utmost, speak and spare not.

Mira. I thank you. *Imprimis*, then, I covenant that your Acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn Confident, or Intimate of your own Sex: No the Friend to screen her Affairs under your Countenance, and tempt you to make Trial of a mutual Secresie. No Decoy-Duck to wheedle you a *fee-scrambling* to the Play in a Mask — Then bring you Home in a pretended Fright, when you think you shall be found out — And rail at me for missing the Play, and disappointing the Frolic which you had to pick me up and prove my Constancy.

Mil. Detestable *Imprimis*! I go to the Play in a Mask.

Mira. *Item*, I article that you continue to like your own Face, as long as I shall: And while it passes current with me, that you endeavour not to new coin it. To which End, together with all Vizards for the Day, I prohibit all Masks for the Night, made of oil'd skins and I know not what. Hog's Bones, Hare's Gall, Pig Water and the Marrow of a roasted Cat. In short, I forbid all Commerce with the Gentlewoman in *What-Eve call it* Court. *Item*, I shut my Doors against all Sawds with Baskets, and Penny worths of *Gong, Fan, Atlatlas, &c.* — *Item*, when you shall be Breeding —

Mil. Ah! name it not.

Mira. Which may be presum'd, with a Blessing on our Endeavours —

Mil. Odious Endeavours!

Mira.

Mis. I denounce against all Strait Lacing, squeezing for a Shape till you mould my Boy's Head like a Sugar-loaf; and instead of a Man Child, make me Father to a crooked Billet. Lastly, to the Dominion of the *Tea-Table* I submit:—But with *Proviso*, that you exceed not in your Province; but restrain yourself to native and simple *Tea-Table* Drinks, as *Tea*, *Chocolate* and *Coffee*. As likewise to genuine and authoriz'd *Tea-Table* Talk:—Such as mending of Fashions, spoiling of Reputations, railing at absent Friends, and so forth. But that on no Account you encroach upon the Mens. Prerogative, and presume to drink Healths, or toast Fellows: for Prevention of which, I banish all *Foreign Forces*, all *Auxiliaries* to the *Tea-Table*, as *Orange Brandy*, all *Anniseed Cinnamon*, *Citron* and *Barbado's Waters*, together with *Ratafia*, and the most noble Spirit of *Clary*.—But for *Caulis-Wine*, *Poppy Water*, and all *Dormitives*, those I allow. These *Provisos* admitted, in other Things I may approve a tractable and complying Husband.

Mil. O horrid *Proviso's*! filthy strong-Waters! I toast Fellows, odious Men! I hate your odious *Proviso's*!

Mis. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your Hand upon the Contract? And here comes one to be a Witness to the sealing of the Deed.

SCENE VI.

(To them) *Mrs. Fainall.*

Mil. Fainall, what shall I do? shall I have him? I think I must have him.

Mrs. Fain. Ay, ay, take him, take him, what shoud you do?

Mil. Well then—I'll take my Death I'm in a horrid Fright.—*Fainall*, I shall never say it.

Well—I think—I'll endure you.

Mrs. Fain. Ey, ey, have him, have him, and tell him so in plain Terms: For I am sure you have a Mind to him.

Mil. Are you? I think I have—and the horrid Man looks as if he thought so, too.—*Well*, you ridiculous Thing you, I'll have you—I won't be kiss'd

nor I won't be thank'd---Here kiss my Hand the---
So, hold your Tongue now, don't say a Word.

Mrs. Fain. Mirabell, there's a Necessity for your Obedience ;--- You have neither Time to talk nor stay. My Mother is coming ; and in my Conscience if she should see you, wou'd fall into Fits, and may be not recover, time enough to return to Sir Rowland ; who, as *Foible* tell me, is in a fair Way to succeed. Therefore spare your Ecstasies for another Occasion, and slip down the back Stairs, where *Foible* waits to consult you.

Mit Ay, go go. In the mean time I suppose you have said something to please me.

Mira, I am all Obedience, and I do it to no man.

SCENE VII.

Millamant, Mrs. Fainalt.

Mrs. Fain. Yonder Sir *Wilful's* drunk; and so no use that my Mother has been forc'd to leave Sir *Rowland* to appease him; but he answers her only with Singing and Drinking--What they may have done by this Time I knew not; but *Petulant* and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

Mil. Well, if *Mirabell* should not make a good Husband, I am a lost Thing; for I find I love him violently

Mrs. Fain. So it seems; for you mind not what's said to you.——If you doubt him you had best take up with Sir Wilfull.

Mr. How can you name that superannuated Lubber?
for I'm over a hundred and I shall never be a Lubber again.

S C E N E V I I I.

(To show) Witwoud from drinking.

Mrs. Fain. So, is the Fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wir. Left 'em! I could stay no longer—I have laugh'd like ten Christnings—I ~~am~~ ^{am} ~~up~~ ^{up} ~~with~~ ^{with} laughing—— If I had stay'd any longer I should have bur'd,—I must have been let out and piec'd in the Sides like an unfix'd Camelot——Ye^e. yes, the Fray is compos'd; my Lady came in like a *Noll profect*, and stop't the Proceedings.

MIL: What was the dispute about?

1990

Wit. That's the Jest; there was no Dispute! They could neither of 'em speak for Rage; and so fell apart, t'ring at one another like too-roasting Apples.

SCENE IX.

(*To them*). *Petulant Drunk.*

Wit. Now *Petulant*? all's over, all's well? Gad my Head begins to whim it about—Why dost thou not speak? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a Fish.

Petu. Look you, *Mrs. Millamant*—if you can love me, dear Nymph—say it—and that's the Conclusion—pass on or pass off—that's all.

Wit. Thou hast utter'd *Volumen, Folios*, in less than *Decid's Sixty*, my dear *Lacedemonian*. *Sirrah, Petulant*, thou art an Epitomizer of Words.

Petu. *Wit-wound*—You art an Annihilator of Sense.

Wit. Thou art a Retailer of Phrases; and dost deal in Remnants of Remnants, like a Maker of Pin-cushions—thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a Speaker of Short-hand.

Petu. Thou art without a Figure, just one half of an Ass, and *Baldwin* yonder thy half Brother is the rest.—A *Gemini* of Asses split, would make just four of you.

Wit. Thou dost bite, my dear Mustard-seed; kifs me for that.

Petu. Stand off—I'll kifs no more Male!—I have kifs'd your *Twin* yonder in a Humour of Reconciliation, 'till he (*biccup*) rises upon my Stomach like a *Raddish*.

Mil. Eh! filthy Creature! what was the Quarrel?—

Petu. There was no Quarrel—there might have been a Quarrel.

Wit. If there had been Words enough between 'em to have expres'd Provocation, they had gone together by the Ears like a Pair of Castanets.

Petu. You were the Quarrel in even hours.

Mil. May I live to see you both in the same way?

Petu. If I have a Humour to quarrel, I can make less Matters conclude Prequises.—If you are not handsome, what then; if I have a humour to prove it—if I shall have my Reward, say so; if not, fight for your Face the next Time yourself—I'll go sleep.

WU. Do, wrap thyself up like a *Woodlouse*, and dream Revenge— And hear me, if thou canst learn to write by To-morrow Morning, pen me a Challenge— I'll carry it for thee.

Petu. Carry your *Mistresses Monkey* & *Spider*.— go flea Dogs, and read Romances— I'll go to Bed to my Maid.

Mrs. Fain. He's horridly drunk— how came you all in this Pickle?

With. A Plot; a Plot to get rid of the Knight.

Your Husband's Advice; but he sneaks off.

Sir Will. *Drunk.* *Lady.* Withfort Witwoud?

Milla-

mant Mrs. Fainall.

Lady With. Out upon't out upon't! at Years of Discretion, and comport yourself at this Rontipole rate!

Sir Will. No Offence, Aunt.

Lady With. Offence? As I'm a Person, I'm a sham'd of you— Foh! how you stink of Wine! D'ye think my Niece will ever endure such a *Brace*? you're an absolute *Barabbas*.

Sir Will. *Barabbas!*

Lady With. A Time when you should commence an Amour, and put your best Foot foremost—

Sir Will. Sheart, can you grutch me your Liquor make a *Bill*— give me more Drink, and take my Purse.

Sings. Prythee fill me the Glass

With. Ale is potent and mellow;

He that whines for a Lash

Is an ignorant Ass

For a *Bunson* has not its Fellow.

But if you woud have me marry my Cousin,

say the Word, and I'll do't— *Willfull* will do't, that's

the Word— *Willfull* will do't, that's my Oath—

my Motto I have forgot.

Lady With. My nephew's a little overtaken, Cousin

But 'tis with drinking your Health— Of my

Word, you are oblig'd to him—

Sir

Sir Wil. In Vice Kariss, Aunt:—If I drunk your Health To-day, Cousin,—I am a Boggler. But if you have a mind to be marry'd, shy the Word and send for the Piper, Wilfull will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other Round—Tony, Ods-heart where's Tony——Tony's an honest Fellow, but he spits after a Bumper, and that's a Fault.

Sings. We'll drink and we'll never be done, Boys,
Put the Glasse then around with the Sun, Boys.
Let Apollo's Example invite us all
For he's drunk ev'ry Night
And that makes him so bright
That he's able next Morning to light us.

The Sun's a good Pimple, an honest Souker, he has a Cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, Aunt, I touch at your Antipodes.——your Antipodes are good rascally sort of toady-turvy Fellows——If I had a Bumper I'd stand upon my Head and drink a Health to 'em——A Match or no Match, Cousin, with the hard Name Aunt, Wilfull will do't. If she has but maiden-head let her look to't; if she has not, let her keep her own Conscience in the interim time, and cry out at the nine Months End.

Mil. Your Pardon, Madam. I can stay no longer—Sir Wilfull grows very powerful. Ego! how he smells! I shall be overcome if I stay. Come, Cousin.

SCENE XI.

Lady Wishfort, Sir Wilfull, Mr. Warwood, Feible.

Lady Wish. Smells! He won'd poison a Tallow Chandelier and his Family. Beastly Creature. I know not what to do with him.——Travel quoth a; at travel, travel, get thee gone, get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks,——they are not fit to live in a Christian Common wealth, thou beastly Pagan.

Sir Wil. Turks! no; no Turks, Aunt; Your Turks are, Infidels, and believe not in the Grape. Your Mahometan, your Mussulman is a dry Simmer.——No Offence Aunt. My Map says that your Turk is not so honest a Man

as your Christian — I can't find by the Map that
your *Mist* is Orthodox — Whereby it is a plain
Case, that Orthodox is a hard Word, Aunt, and (*sheep*)
Greek for Chisel.

Sings. To drink is a Christian Diversion.

Unknown to the Turk or the Persian.

Let Mahometan Fools

Live by Heathenish Rules,

And be damn'd over Tea-Cups and Coffee.

But let British Lads

Crown a Health to the King,

And a Fig for your Sultan and Sophy.

Ab, Tony!

(Foible *subspers* Lady Wishfort.

Lady *Wish*. Sir Rowland's impatience! Good Jack! What
shall I do with this beastly Tambourine? — He
now and then, you see, — Or as I'm a person I'll
have you basted with Broomsticks. Call up the
Wench, with Broomsticks.

Sir *Will*. (Alone) Wench, where are the Wench?

Lady *Wish*. Dear Cousin, it would, get him away and
you will bid me do you involubly. I have an Affair of
Moment that invades me with some Precipitation.
You will oblige me to all Futurity.

Sir *Will*. Come Knight — For on him I don't know
what to say to him — Will you go to a Cock-
Match?

Sir *Will*. With a Wench, Tony? Is she a Snake-bag,
Sirrah? Let me bite your Cheek for that.

Sir *Will*. Horrible! he has a Breath like a Bag-pipe —
Ay, ay, come will you march, my *Salspider*?

Sir *Will*. Stand on, little Tony — I'll follow thee my
Antony, my *Tammy*; Sirrah thou shalt be my *Tammy*,
and I'll be thy Pig.

———— And a Fig for your Sultan and Sophy.

Lady *Wish*. This will never do. It will never make
a Match. — At least before he has been abroad.

SCENE

SCENE XII.

Lady Wishfort, Waitwell disguised as for Sir Rowland.

Lady Wish. Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with Confusion at the Retrospection of my own Rudeness. — I have more pardons to ask than the Pope distributes in the Year of Jubilee. But I hope where there is likely to be so near an Alliance. — We may unband the Severity of Decorum — and dispense with a little Ceremony.

Wait. My Impatience, Madam, is the Effect of my Transport; — and till I have the Possession of your adorable Person, I am tantaliz'd on the Rack; — and do but hang, Madam, on the Tenter of Expectation.

Lady Wish. You have Excess of Gallantry, Sir Rowland; and press Things to a Conclusion with a most prevailing Vehemence. — But a Day or two for Decency of Marriage.

Wait. For Decency of Funeral, Madam. The Delay will break my Heart; — or if that should fail, I shall be poison'd. My Nephew will get an inkling of my Designs, and poison me; — and I would willingly starve him before I die — I would gladly go out of the World with that Satisfaction. — That would be some Comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be reveng'd on that unnatural Viper.

Lady Wish. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly I would contribute much both to the saving of your Life, and the Accomplishment of your Revenge — Not that I respect myself, tho' he has been a perfidious Wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady Wish. O Sir Rowland, the Hours that he has dy'd away at my Feet; the Tears that he has shed; the Oaths that he has sworn; the Palpitations that he has felt; the Trances and the Tremblings, the Ardors and the Eclipses, the Kneelings and the Risings, the Heart-beatings, and the Hand-grabbings, the Pangs and the Pathos of Regard; of his protesting Eyes! Oh no Memory can register.

Wait. What, my Rival! Is the Rebel my Rival? — dies.

Lady Wish. No don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland, starve him gradually Inch by Inch.

Wait.

Wait. I'll do't. In three Weeks he shall be bare-foot ; in a Month out at Knees with begging an Alms,—he shall starve upward and upward, till he has nothing living but his Head, and then go out in a Stink like a Candle's End upon a Save-all.

Lady W. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the Way. You are no Novice in the Labyrinth of Love. You have the Cue——But as I am a Person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my Yielding to any sinister Appetite, or Indignation of Widow-hood ; nor impute my Complacency to any Lethargy of Continence——I hope you do not think me prone to any Iteration of Nuptials.

Wait. Far be it from me.

Lady W. If you do, I protest I must recede—or think that I have made a Prostitution of Decorum, but in the Vehemence of Compassion, and to save the Life of a Person of so much Importance.

Wait. Pardon it so.

Lady W. Or else you wrong my Condescension.

Wait. I do not, I do not.

Lady W. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, Sir Shrine of Virtue.

Lady W. If you think the least Scruple of Carnality was an Ingredient.

Wait. Dear Madam, no. You are all Candour and Frankness, all Chastity and Odour.

Lady W. Or that.

SCENE XII

(To them, Enter)

Wait. Madam, the Dancers are ready, and there's one with a Letter, who must deliver it into your own Hands.

Lady W. Sir Rowland, will you give me Leave? There's seriously, more candidly, and candidly you have found a Person who would enter Racks in Honour's Castle, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly.

SCENE

SCENE XIV. *Waitwell, Foible, and a Servant.*

Wait. Fig, fig! — What a Slavery have I undergone! Spouse, hast thou any Cordial, I want Spirits.
Foi. What a washy Rogue art thou, to put this for a Quarter of an Hour's lying and swearing to a fine Lady?
Wait. O, tis the Antidote to Deaf. Spouse, thou wilt fare the worse for't — I shall have an Appetitised Iteration of Nuptials — this eight and forty times — By this Hand, I'd rather be a charman in the Dog-days — than act Sir Rowland — till this time to-morrow —

SCENE XV. *Spirit W and a Servant.*

(To them.) Lady Withnut with a Letter.

Lady With. Call in the Dancers — Sir Rowland will sit, if you please, and see the Entertainment. *(Dances.)* Now with your Permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my Letter — I would open it in your Presence, because I would not make you uneasy — If it should make you uneasy I would burn it — speak if it does — but you may see, the Superfcription's like a Woman's Hand.

Foi. By Heaven! Ma. Mercades: I know it — My Heart aches — get it from her — *(Exit Spirit W.)*

Wait. A Woman's Hand? No Madam, that's no Woman's Hand, I see that already. That's some body whose Throat must be cut.

Lady With. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a Proof of your Passion by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a Return by a frank Communication — You shall see it — we'll open it together — look you here.

Ready. Madam, the hatching is over. *(Looks you there, tis from no Body that I know.)* I have that Honour for your Character, that I think myself oblig'd to let you know you are abus'd. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland is a Cheat and a Rascal.

Oh Heavens! What's this?

Foi. Unfortunate! all's mis'd! — *(Exit Lady With.)*

Wait. How, how? let me see, let me see — reading a Rascal and disguised, and I am to see that Imposture —

O Villainy! O Villainy! By the Conscience —

Lady With. I shall sing, I shall sing —

— you sing and I sing —

Fai. Say 'tis your Nephew's Hand?—Quickly, his Plot, swear, swear it, to show it W. *(To him.)*

Wait. Here's a Villain! Madam! don't you perceive it, don't you see it?

Lady Wils. Too well, too well I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you so, didn't I?—A Woman's Hand? The Rascal writes a Sort of a large Hand; your Nephew's Hand is— I saw there was a Throat to be cut presently; if he were my Son, as he is my Nephew, I'd pistol him.

Fai. O Treachery! But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his Writing?

Wait. Sure? Am I here? Do I live? Do I love this Pearl of India? I have twenty Letters in my Pocket from him, in the same Character.

Lady Wils. How!— I heard that you were present at this Juncture! This was the Business that brought Mr. Mirabell disguised to Madam Millamant this Afternoon, I thought! something was contriving, when he stole by me and would have hid his Face.

Lady Wils. How, how!— I heard the Villain was in the House indeed, and now I remember, my Niece went away abruptly, when Sir Wilsall was to have made his Addresses.

Fai. Then, then, Madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her Chamber; but I would not tell your Ladyship, to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough; his Date is short.

Fai. No, good Sir Rowland, don't meet the Law.

Wait. Law! I care not for Law. I can but die, and win a good Case.— My Lady shall be satisfy'd of my Truth and Innocence, tho' it cost me my Life.

Lady Wils. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight, if you should be kill'd I must never shew my Face, or hang'd O consider my Reputation, Sir Rowland.— No you shan't fight.— I'll go in and examine my Niece; I'll make her confess I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your Love not to fight.

Wait. I am charg'd Madam, I obey. But some Proof you must let me give you,— I'll go for a black Box, which

which contains the writings of my whole Estate, and deliver that into your Hands.

Lady *W.* My dear Sir Rowland, that will be some Comfort, bring the black Box.

Wid. And may I presume to bring a Contract to be sign'd this Night? May I hope so far?

Lady *W.* Bring what you will, but come alive, pray come alive. O this is a happy Discovery.

Wid. Dead or alive I'll come—and married, we will be in spite of Treachery; ay and get an Heir that shall defeat the last remaining Glimpse of Hope in my abandoned Nephew. Come, my buxom Widow.

Ere long you shall substantial Profits receive

That I'm an arrant Knight—

Pol. —Or arrant Knave.

~~I'm a Knight, and you are a Knave, and you are a~~

~~Knave, and you are a Knight, and you are a~~

~~Knave, and you are a Knight, and you are a~~

~~Knave, and you are a Knight, and you are a~~

~~Knave, and you are a Knight, and you are a~~

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~~Knave, and you are a Knight, and you are a~~

~~Knave, and you are a Knight, and you are a~~

ACT V. SCENE I.

(SCENE continues.)

Lady *W.* Will you and Polite.

Lady *W.* O! of my House, not a single Room,

nor a single Room, nor a single Room, nor a single Room,

nor a single Room, nor a single Room, nor a single Room,

nor a single Room, nor a single Room, nor a single Room,

nor a single Room, nor a single Room, nor a single Room,

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nor a single Room, nor a single Room, nor a single Room,

nor a single Room, nor a single Room, nor a single Room,

nor a single Room, nor a single Room, nor a single Room,

die; a Glass Necklace, with the Beads broken, and a quilted Night-cap with one Ear. Go, go, drive a Trade— These were your Commodities, you upstart Trull, this was the Merchandize you dealt in, when I took you into my House, plac'd you next myself, and made you Governante of my whole Family. You have forgot this, have you, now you have feather'd your Nest?

Fai. No, no, dear Madam; Do but hear me, have but a Moment's Patience. — I'll confess all. Mr. Mirabell seduc'd me, I am not the first that he has wheedled with his dissembling Tongue. Your Ladyship's own Wildom has been deluded by him, then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend myself? O Madam, if you knew but what he promised me, and how he assur'd me your Ladyship should come to no damage — Or else the Wealth of the Ladies shou'd not have brib'd me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a Lady as you have been to me.

Lady Wif. No Damage? What, to betray me, to marry me to a Cast-fering Man; to make me a Receptacle, an Hospital for a decay'd pimp? No Damage? O thou frontless Impudence, more than a big-belly'd Actress.

Fai. Pray do but hear me, Madam; he could not marry your Ladyship, Madam. — No indeed this Marriage was against the Law; for he was marry'd to me first, and so your Ladyship; he could not have bedded your Ladyship; for if he had consummated with your Ladyship, he must have run the Risque of the Law and been put on his Clergy. — Yes indeed, I enquir'd of the Law in that Case before I would meddle or make.

Lady Wif. What then have been your Property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it seems. — While you were courting for Mirabell; I have been a Broker for you. What? have you made a positive Law of me? — This exceeds all precedent; I am brought to the Oies, to become a Broker or Second-hand Broker between Mirabell and your Ladyship. Will you? Yes, I'll back you together, you and your Mistress? — Yes, I'll back you as I'm a Person. — Your Turbans in Custody already? — Your shall be in the same Cage, if there be a Constable or Warrant in the Parish.

Fai.

Fai. O that ever I was born, O that I was ever marry'd, — a Bride, ay I shall be a Bride-well-Bride. ON

SCENE II.

Mr. Fainall, Poible.

Mrs. Fain. Poor *Poible*, what's the Matter?

Fai. O Madam, my Lady's gone for a Constable; I shall be had to Justice, and put to *Bride-well* to beat Hemp; poor *Waitwell*'s gone to Prison already.

Mrs. Fain. Have a good Heart, *Poible*, *Mirabell*'s gone to give Security for him. This is all *Mirabell*'s and my Husband's doing.

Fai. Yes, yes; I know it, Madam, she was in my Lady's Closet, and over-heard all that you said to me before Dinner. She sent the Letter to my Lady, and that mis-laying-Effect, *Mr. Fainall* had this Plot to arrest *Waitwell*, when he pretended to go for the Papers; and in the mean Time *Mrs. Marwood* declar'd all to my Lady.

Mrs. Fain. Was there no mention made of me in the Letter? — My Mother does not suspect my being in the Confederacy: I fancy *Mirabell* has not told her tho' she has told my Husband.

Fai. Yes, Madam; but my Lady did not see that Part: We stifted the Letter before she read so far. Has that mischievous Devil told *Mr. Fainall* of your Ladyship then?

Fain. Ay, all's out, my Affair with *Mirabell*, every Thing discover'd. This is the last Day of our living together that's my Comfort.

Fai. Indeed, Madam, and so is a Comfort if you knew all, — he has been even with your Ladyship, which I cou'd have told you long enough since, but I love to keep Peace and Quietness by my good will. I had rather bring Friends together than set them at a Distance. But *Mrs. Marwood* and he are nearer related than ever their Parents thought for.

Mrs. Fain. Say it thou *Poible*? Canst thou prove this?

Fai. I can take my Oath of it, Madam, so can *Mrs. Mirabell*; we had many a fair Word from *Madam Marwood* to conceal something that pass'd in our Chamber one Evening when you were at *High-Park*; — and we were thought to have gone a Walking? But we went

up unawares,—tho' we were sworn to Secrecy too; Madam *Marwood* took a Book and swore upon it: But it was a Book of Poems:—So long as it was not a Bible-Oath, we may break it with a safe Conscience.

Mrs. Fain. This Discovery is the most opportune Thing I cou'd wish—Now, *Minsing*?

SCENE III.

(*to them*) *Minsing.*

Mins. My Lady wou'd speak with *Mrs. Feible*. *Mrs. Mirabell* is with her, he has set your Spouse at liberty. *Mrs. Feible*, and wou'd have you hide yourself in my Lady's Closet, 'till my old Lady's anger is abated. O my old Lady is in a perilous Passion; at something *Mr. Fainall* has said; he swears, and my old Lady cries: There's a fearful hurricane I vow. He says, *Mrs.* how that he'll have my Lady's Fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

Mrs. Fain. Does your Lady or *Minsing* know that?
Mins. Yes, *Mrs.* they have sent me to see if *Sir Willfall* be sober, and to bring him to them. My Lady is resolv'd to have him, I think; rather than lose such a vast Sum as six thousand Pound. O, come *Mrs. Feible*, I hear my old Lady.

Mrs. Fain. *Feible*, you must tell *Minsing*, that she must prepare to vouch when I call her. *Fei.* Yes, yes, Madam.

Mins. O, yes, *Mrs.* I'll vouch any Thing for your Ladyship's Service, be it what it will.

SCENE IV.

Mrs. Fainall *Leop. Withford.* *Marwood.* *O Sir* *Lady With.* O my dear Friends, how can I enumerate the Benefits that I have receiv'd from your Goodness. To you I owe the timely Discovery of the false Nature of *Mirabell*, to you I owe the Detection of the impostor *Sir Rowland*. And now you are become an Intercessor with my Son-in-law, to save the Honour of my House, and compound for the Follies of my Daughter. Well, Friends, you are enough to rebucile me to the bad World, or else I would resign to Desarts and Solitudes, and feed him with Sheep by! Grotts and pulsing Streams. Dear *Marwood*

wood

wood, let us leave the World, and retire by ourselves, and be Shepherdesses.

Mar. Let us first dispatch the Affair in Hand, Madam. We shall have leisure to think of Retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the Treaty.

Lady Wils. O Daughter, Daughter, is it possible thou should'st be my Child, Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh, and as I may say, another Me, and yet transgress the minute Particles of severe Virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to Iniquity, who have been cast in the direct Mold of Virtue? I have not only been a Mold, but a Pattern for you, and a Model for you, after you were brought into the World.

Mrs. Fain. I don't understand your Ladyship.

Lady Wils. Not understand? Why, have you not been Naught? Have you not been sophisticated? Not understood? Here I am ruin'd to compound for your Caprices and your Cuckoldoms. I must pawn my Plate and my Jewels, and ruin my Niece, and all little enough.

Mrs. Fain. I am wrong'd and abus'd and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation, as false as Hell, as false as your Friend there, ay or your friend's friend, my false husband.

Mar. My Friend, Mrs. Fainall! Your Husband my Friend! what do you mean?

Mrs. Fain. I know what I mean, Madam, and so do you; and so shall the World at a time convenient.

Mar. I am sorry to see you so passionate, Madam. More Temper would look more like Innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my Zeal to serve your Ladyship and Family, should admit of Misconstruction, or make me liable to Affronts. You will pardon me, Madam, if I meddle no more with an Affair, in which I am not personally concern'd.

Lady Wils. O dear Friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such Returns; ——— You ought to ask pardon on your Knees, ungrateful Creature; she deserves more from you, than all your Life can accomplish.

—O don't leave me destitute in this Perplexity; ——— No, stick to me, me, my good Genius.

Mrs. Fain. I tell you, Madam, you're abus'd. ———

Stick to you? ay, like a Leach to suck your best Blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you shan't pawn a Rodkin, nor part with a Brass Counter, in Composition for me. I despise 'em all. Let 'em prove their Aspersions: I know my own Innocence, and dare stand the Tryal.

SCENE V.

Lady Wishfort, Marwood.

Lady Wish. Why, if she should be innocent, if she should be wrong'd after all ha? I don't know what to think, ——— and I promise you, her Education has been very unexceptionable——I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own Care to initiate her very Infancy in the Rudiments of Virtue, and to impress upon her tender Years a young Odium and Aversion to the very Sight of Men,——ay Friend, she wou'd ha' shriek'd if she had but seen a Man, till she was in her Teens. As I'm a Person tis true——She was never suffer'd to play with a Male Child, tho' but in Coats; Nay, her very Babies were of the *Feminine Gender*,——O, she never look'd a Man in the Face, but her own Father or the Chaplain, and him we made a Shift to put upon her for a Woman, by the help of his long Garments, and his sleek Face; till she was going in her Fifteen.

Mar. 'Tis much she should be deceiv'd so long.

Lady Wish. I warrant you, or she would never have born to have been catechiz'd by him; and have heard his long Lectures against singing and dancing, and such Debaucheries; and going to filthy Plays; and prophane musick-meetings, where the lewd Trebles squeek nothing but Bawdy, and the Bases roar Blasphemy. O, she would have swoon'd at the Sight or Name of an obscene Play-Book——and can I think after all this, that my daughter can be naught; What, a Whore? And thought it Excommunication to set her Foot within the Door of a Play-house. O dear Friend, I can't believe it, no, no; as she says, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mar. Prove it, Madam? What, and have your name prostituted in a publick Court; yours and your daughter's reputation worry'd at the bar by a pack of bawling lawyers? To be usher'd in with an *O Yes* of Scandal, and have your Case open'd by an old fumbling Leacher in a Quib like

like a Man-Midwife, to bring your Daughter's Infamy to Light; to be a Theme for legal Purifiers, and Quiblers by the Statute; and become a Jest, against a Rule of Court, where there is no Precedent for a Jest in any Record; not even in *Dooms-Day-Book*. To discompose the Gravity of the Bench, and provoke naughty Interrogatories in more naughty Law *Latin*; while the good Judge, tickled with the Proceeding, fimpers under a Grey Beard, and sidges off and on his Cushion, as if he had swallow'd *Cantharides*, or sat upon *Cow-itch*.

Lady Wish. O 'tis very hard!

Mar. And then to have my young Revellers of the *Temple* take Notes, like Prentices at a Conventicle; and after talk it over again in Commons, or before Drawers in an Eating-house.

Lady Wish. Worse and worse.

Mar. Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here 'twere well. But it must after this be consign'd by the Shorthand Writers to the public Press; and from thence, be transferr'd to the Hands, nay, into the Throats and Lungs of Hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud Flounder-man's: And this you must hear 'till you are stunn'd; nay, you must hear nothing else for some Days.

Lady Wish. O, 'tis insupportable. No, no, dear Friend, make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up all, my self and my all, my Niece and her all -- any thing, every thing for Composition.

Mar. Nay, Madam, I advise nothing; I only lay before you, as a Friend, the Inconveniencies which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr. *Fainall*. If he will be satisfy'd to huddle up all in Silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than console with you.

SCENE VI.

Fainall, Lady Wishfort, Marwood.

Lady Wish. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear *Marwood*. No, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, Madam; I have suffer'd myself to be overcome by the Importunity of this Lady your Friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper *Requaring* Life; on Condition you oblige yourself never to marry, under such Penalty as I think convenient.

Lady Wish. Never to marry? *Fain.*

Fain. No more *Sir Rowlands*,—the next Imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mar. That Condition, I dare answer, my Lady will consent to, without Difficulty; she has already but too much experienc'd the Perfidiousness of Man. Besides, Madam, when we retire to our Pastoral Solitude we shall bid adieu to all other Thoughts.

Lady Wisp. Ay, that's true; but in case of Necessity; as of Health, or some such Emergency—

Fain. O, if you are prescrib'd Marriage, you shall be consider'd; I will only reserve to my self the Power to chuse for you. If your Physick be wholesome, it matters not who is your Apothecary. Next, my wife shall settle on me the Remainder of her Fortune, not made over already; and for her Maintenance depend entirely on my Discretion.

Lady Wisp. This is most inhumanly savage; exceeding the Barbarity of a *Muscovite* Husband.

Fain. I learn'd it from his *Czarish* Majesty's Retinue, in a Winter Evening's Conference over Brandy and Pepper, among other Secrets of Matrimony and Policy, as they are at present practis'd in the Northern Hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endow'd in right of my Wife, with that six thousand Pound, which is the moiety of Mrs. *Millamant's* Fortune in your Possession; and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last Will and Testament of your deceased husband, *Sir Jonathan Wispfort*) by her Disobedience in contracting herself against your Consent or Knowledge; and by refusing the offer'd match with *Sir Wilfull Wistwood*, which you, like a careful Aunt, had provided for her.

Lady Wisp. My Nephew was *non Compos*; and could not make his Addresses.

Fain. I come to make Demands—I'll hear no Objections.

Lady Wisp. You will grant me Time to consider?

Fain. Yes, while the Instrument is drawing, to which you must set your Head, till more sufficient Deeds can be perfected; which I will take Care shall be done with all possible Speed. In the mean while I will get the said Instrument, and 'till my Return you may balance this Matter in your own Discretion!!

S C E N E

SCENE VII.

Lady Wishfort Mrs. Marwood.

Lady Wish. This insolence is beyond all precedent, a Parallel; must I be subject to this merciless Villain?

Mar. 'Tis severe indeed, Madam; that you should smart for your Daughter's Wantonness.

Lady Wish. 'Twas against my Consent that she marry'd this Barbarian; but she would have him, tho' her Year was not out.—Ah! her first Husband, my Son *Languish*, would not have carried it thus. Well, that was my Choice, this is hers; she is match'd now with a Witness—I shall be mad, dear Friend is there no Comfort for me? Must I live to be confiscated at this Rebel-rate?—Here comes two more of my *Egyptian Plagues* too.

SCENE VIII.

(to them) Millamant, *Sir Wilfull.*

Sir Wil. Aunt, your Servant.

Lady Wish. Out *Caterpillar*, call not me Aunt, I know thee not.

Sir Wil. I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say,—Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What would you have? I hope I committed no Offence, Aunt—and if I did I am willing to make Satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broke anything I'll pay for't, an' it cost a Pound. And so let that content for what's past and make no more Words. For what's to come, to pleasure you, I'm willing to marry my Cousin. So pray let's all be Friends, she and I are agreed upon the Matter before a Witness.

Lady Wish. How's this, dear Niece? Have I any Comfort? can this be true?

Mil. I am content to be a Sacrifice to your Repose, Madam; and to convince you that I had no hand in the Plot, as you were misinform'd, I have laid my Commands on *Mirabell* to come in Person and be a Witness that I give my Hand to this Flower of *Knighthood*; and for the Contract that pass'd between *Mirabell* and me. I have oblig'd him to make a Resignation of it in your Ladyship's Presence;—He is without, and waits your leave for Admittance.

Lady Wish. Well, I'll swear I am something reviv'd at this Testimony of your Obedience; but I cannot admit

that Traitor,—I fear I cannot fortify myself to support his Appearance. He is as terrible to me as Gorgon, if I see him I fear I shall turn to a Stone, and petrify incessantly.

Mil. If you disoblige him he may resent your Refusal, and insist upon the Contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

Lady Wish. Are you sure it will be the last time;—If I were sure of that—shall I ever see him again?

Mil. Sir *Wilsall*, you and he are to travel together, are you not?

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, the Gentleman's a civil Gentleman, Aunt, let him come in; why we are sworn Brothers and Fellow-travellers.—We are to be *Pyldes* and *Ovessis*, he and I—He is to be my Interpreter in Foreign Parts. He has been over-seas once already, and with proviso that I marry my Cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me Company.—'Sheart, I'll call him in.—ah I fear on't once, he shall come in; and see who'll hinder him.

(Goes to the Door and brings.)
Mar. This is precious Fooling, if it would pass; but I'll know the bottom of it.

Lady Wish. O dear *Marwood*, you are not going.

Mar. Not far Madam, I'll return immediately.

S C E N E IX.

Lady Wishfort, Millicent, Sir Wilsall, Milabell.

Sir Wil. Look up, Man, I'll stand by you; 'shud, an she do frown, she can't kill you.—Besides—'harkee, she dare not frown desperately, because her Face is none of her own;—'Sheart, an she should, her Forehead wou'd wrinkle like a coat of Cream-Cheese; but mum for that, Fellow-Traveller.

Mira. If a deep Sense of the many Injuries I have offered to so good a Lady, with a sincere Remorse, and a hearty Confession, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy.—Ah Madam, there was a time—But let it be forgotten—I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high Place I once held, of sitting at your Feet; nay kill me not, by turning from me in Disdain—I come not to plead for Favour;—Nay, not for Pardon; I am a suppliant only for Pity—I am going where I never shall behold you more—

Sir

Sir Wil. Now, Fellow-Travellet! — You shall go by yourself then.

Mira. Let me be pick'd first; and afterwards forgotten — I ask no more.

Sir Wil. By'r Lady a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing. Aunt, — Come, come, forgive and forget, Aunt, why you must as you are a Christian.

Mira. Consider, Madam, in Reality, you could not receive much Prejudice; it was an innocent device; tho' I confess it had a Face of Guiltiness. — It was at most an Artifice which Love contriv'd. — And Errors which Love produces have ever been accounted *Vanial*. At least think it is Punishment enough, that I have lost what in my Heart I hold most dear; that to your cruel Indignation, I have offer'd up this Beauty, and with her my Peace and Quiet; nay all my Hopes of future Comfort.

Sir Wil. And he does not move me, wou'd I may never be. *Of the Quorum*. — And it were not so good a Deed as to drink, to give her to him again, — I wou'd I might never take Shipping. — Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt. I can tell you that. My Contract went no farther than a little Mouth Grew, and that's hardly dry. — One doleful sigh more from my Fellow-Travellet, and 'tis dissolv'd.

Lady Wils. Well, Nephew, upon your Account. — Ah, he has a false insinuating Tongue. — Well, Sir, I will stife my just Resentment at my Nephew's Request, — I will endeavour what I can to forget, — but on pre-*viso* that you resign the Contract with my Niece immediately.

Mira. It is in Writing and with Papers of Concern; but I have sent my Servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all Acknowledgments for your transcendend Goodness.

L. Wils. Oh, he has Witchcraft in his Eyes and Tongue; — When I did not see him, I cou'd have brib'd a Villain to his Assassination; but his Appearance takes the Embers which have so long lain smother'd in my Breast. — *(Aside)*

SCENE X.

(To Mira) Fainall, Mrs. Marwood. — Fain. Your Date of Deliberation, Madam, is expir'd. Here is the Instrument, are you prepar'd to sign?

Lady Wils. If I were prepar'd I am not improv'd. My

My Niece exerts a lawful Claim, having match'd herself by my Directions to Sir *Wilfull*.

Fain. That sham is too gross to pass on me—tho' 'tis impos'd on you, Madam.

Mil. Sir, I have giv'n my Consent.

Mira. And Sir I have resign'd my Pretensions.

Sir *Wil*. And, Sir, I assert my Right; and will maintain it in Defiance of you, Sir, and of your Instrument. 'Sheart, an you talk of an Instrument, Sir, I have an old Fox by my Thigh shall hack your Instrument of *Ram Vellum* to shreds, Sir. It shall not be sufficient for a *Mittimus* or a Taylor's Measure; therefore withdraw your Instrument, Sir, or by'r Lady I shall draw mine.

Lady Wish. Hold, Nephew, hold.

Mil. Good Sir *Wilfull* respite your Valour.

Fain. Indeed? Are you provided of your Guard, with your single Beef-eater there? But I am prepar'd for you; and insist upon my first Proposal. You shall submit your own Estate to my Management and absolutely make over my Wife's to my sole Use: as pursuant to the Purport and Tenor of this other Covenant.—I suppose, Madam, your Consent is not requisite in this Case; nor, Mr. *Mirabell*, your Resignation? nor, Sir *Wilfull*, your Right—You may draw your Fox if you please, Sir, and make a *Bear Garden* flourish somewhere else; For here it will not avail. This, My Lady *Wishfort*, must be subscrib'd or your Darling Daughter's turn'd admistr, like a leaky Hulk to sink or swim, as she and the Current of this lewd Town can agree.

Lady Wish. Is there no Means, no Remedy, to stop my Ruin? Ungrateful Wretch! Dost thou not owe thy Being, thy Subsistence to my Daughter's Fortune?

Fain. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my Possession.

Mira. But that you wou'd not accept of a Remedy from my Hands— I own I have not deserv'd you shou'd owe any Obligation to me, or else perhaps I cou'd advise.

Lady Wish. O what? what? to save me and my Child from Ruin, from Want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay I'll consent to any Thing to come, to be deliver'd from this Tyranny.

Mira. Ay, Madam; but that is too late, thy Reward is

intercepted. You have dispos'd of her, who only could have made me a Compensation for all my Services;— But be it as it may, I am resolv'd I'll serve you, you shall not be wrong'd in this savage Manner.

Lady *Wish.* How! Dear Mr. *Mirabell*, can you be so generous at last! But it is not possible—Harkee, I'll break my nephew's Match, you shall have my Niece yet and all her Fortune; if you can but save me from this imminent Danger.

Mira. Will you? I take you at your Word, I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

Lady *Wish.* Ay, ay, any Body, any Body.

Mira. *Foible* is one, and a Penitent.

SCENE XI.

(*To them*) Mrs. *Fainall*, *Foible*, *Mincing*.

Mrs. *Mar.* O my Shame! (*Mira. and Lady go to Mrs. Fain and Foible*) these corrupt Things are brought hither to expose me. (*To Fainall.*)

Fain. If it must all come out, why let 'em know it, 'tis but the *Way of the World*. That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one Tittle of my Terms, no, I will insist the more.

Foi. Yes indeed, Madam; I'll take my Bible-Oath of it

Minc. And so will I, *Mom.*

Lady *Wish.* O *Martwood*, *Martwood*, art thou false? My Friend deceive me? Hast thou been a wicked Accomplise with that profligate Man?

Mar. Have you so much Ingratitude and Injustice, to give Credit against your Friend, to the aspersions of two such mercenary Trulls?

Minc. Mercenary, *Mom*? I from your Words. 'Tis true, we found you and Mr. *Fainall* in the blue Garret; by the same Token, you swore us to secrecy upon *Messalinus's* Poems. Mercenary? No, if we would have been mercenary, we should have held our Tongues; you would have brib'd us sufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an insignificant Thing—Well; what are you the better for this?—*Mr. Mirabell's* Expedient I'll be put off no longer—You, Thing, that was a Wife, shall smart for this, I will not leave thee where withal to hide thy Shame: Your Body shall be naked as your Reputation.

Mrs. *Fain.* I despise you, and defy your Malice—You have.

have aspers'd me wrongfully—I have prov'd your Falsehood—Go you and your treacherous—I will not name it, but starve together—Perish.

Fain. Not while you are worth a Groat indeed my Dear, Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer!

Lady Wisb. Ah Mr. *Mirabell*, this is small Comfort, the Detection of this Affair.

Mira. O in good time—Your leave for the other Offender and penitent to appear, Madam.

S C E N E XII.

(*To them*) *Waitwell* with a Box of Writings.

Lady Wisb. O Sir *Rowland*—Well, Ratcat.

Wait. What your Ladyship pleases—I have brought the Black-Box at last, Madam.

Mira. Give it me, Madam you remember your promise.

Lady Wisb. Ay, dear Sir.

Mira. Where are the Gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, Sir, rubbing their Eyes—just rising from Sleep.

Fain. S'death! what's this to me? I'll not wait your private Concerns.

S C E N E III. (*To them*) *Petulant*. *Witwoud*.

Petu. How now? what's the matter? whose hand's out?

Wit. Hey day! what are you all got together, like Players at the End of the last Act?

Mira. You may remember, Gentlemen, I once requested your Hands as Witnesses to a certain Parchment.

Wit. Ay do, my hand I remember—*Petulant* set his Mark

Mira. You wrong him, his Name is fairly written, as shall appear—You do not remember, Gentlemen, any thing of what that Parchment contained? (*Undoing the Box.*)

Petu. Not I. I writ, I read nothing.

Mira. Very well now you shall know—Madam, your promise.

Lady Wisb. Ay, ay, Sir, upon my Honour.

Mira. Mr. *Fainall*, it is now time that you shou'd know that your Lady, while she was at her own Disposal, and before you had by your Insinuations wheedled her out of a pretended Settlement of the greatest Part of her Fortune.

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mira. Yes, Sir. I say that this Lady, while a Widow, having it seems receiv'd some Cautions respecting your In-

con-

constancy and Tyranny of Temper, which from her own partial Opinion and Fondness of you she cou'd never have suspected—she did, I say, by the wholesome Advice of Friends, and Sages learn'd in the Laws of this Land, deliver this same as her Act and Deed to me in Trust, and to the Uses within mention'd. You may read if you please ——— (*Holding out the Parchment.*) tho' perhaps what is written on the Back may serve your Occasions.

Fain. Very likely, Sir, What's here? Damnation?
(*Reads.*) *A Deed of Conveyance of the whole Estate real of Arabella Languish, Widow, in Trust to Edward Mirabell.* Confusion!

Mira. Even so Sir: 'tis *the Way of the World*, Sir; of the Widows of the World. I suppose this Deed may bear an elder Date than what you have obtain'd from your Lady.

Fain. Perfidious Friend! then thus I'll be reveng'd. ——— (*Offers to run at Mrs. Fainall.*)

Sir Wil. Hold, Sir; now you may make your *Beard-Garden* flourish some where else, Sir.

Fain. *Mirabell*, you shall hear of this, Sir, besure you shall. ——— Let me pass, Oaf.

Mrs. Fain. Madam, you seem to stifle your Resentment: You had better give it Vent.

Mar. Yes, it shall have Vent—and to your Confusion or I'll perish in the Attempt.

S C E N E the Last.

Lady Wishfort, Millamont, Mirabell, Mrs. Fainall, Sir Wilful, Petulant, Witwoud, Foible, Mincing, Waitwell.

Lady Wilsb. O Daughter, Daughter, 'tis plain thou hast inherit'd thy Mother's Prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Thank Mr. *Mirabell*, a cautious Friend to whose advice all is owing.

Lady Wilsb. Well, Mr. *Mirabell*, you have kept your Promise—and I must perform mine.—First I pardon for you sake Sir *Rowland* there and *Foible*—The next thing is to break the Matter to my Nephew—and how to do that—

Mira. For that, Madam, give your self no Trouble. let me have your Consent—Sir *Wilful* is my Friend; he has had Compassion upon Lovers, and generously engag'd a Volunteer in this Action, for our Service; and now designs to prosecute his Travels.

Sir

Sir Wil. Sheart. Aunt, I have no mind to marry. My Cousin's a fine Lady, and the Gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another; my Resolution is to see Foreign Parts—I have set on't—and when I'm set on't, I must do't. And if these two Gentlemen wou'd travel too, I think they may be spared!

Petu. For my part, I say little—I think things are best; off or on.

Wait. I gad I understand nothing of the Matter. I'm in a Maze yet, like a Dog in a Dancing-School.

Lady Wimb. Well, Sir, take her and with her all the Joy I can give you.

Mil. Why does not the Man take me? Wou'd you have me give my self to you over again?

Mira. Ay, and over and over again; (*Kisses her hand*) I wou'd have you as often as possibly I can. Well, Heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my Fear.

Sir Wil. Sheart. you'll have time enough to toy after you're marry'd; if you will toy now, let us have a Dance in the mean time, that we who are not Lovers may have some other employment, besides looking on.

Mira. With all my Heart, dear *Sir Wifull*. What shall we do for Musick?

Fo. O Sir, some that were provided for *Sir Rowland's* Entertainment are yet within Call. (*A dance.*)

Lady Wimb. As I am a Person I can hold out no longer—I have wasted my Spirits so to-day already, that I am ready to sink under the Fatigue; and cannot but have some Fears upon me yet, that my Son *Fairfall* will pursue some desperate Course.

Mira. Madam, disquiet not yourself on that Account; to my Knowledge his Circumstances are such, he must of Force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lies to a Re-union. In the mean time, Madam, (*To Mrs. Fain.*) let me before these Witnesses restore to you this Deed of Trust; it may be a Means, well manag'd, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warn'd, who mean to wed;
Left mutual Falshood stain the Bridal-Bed;
For each Deceiver to his Cost may find,
That Marriage-Frauds too oft are paid in kind.

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